

Monday August 10 1998

Abkhazian D 0.50
Albanian L 1.00
Andorran FF 10
Austrian S 30
Belarusian BR 0.05
Belgian BF 10
Bolivian LV 500
Brazilian R 100
Croatian HR 10
Cypriot C 1.00
Czechian CZ 100
Danish DK 17
Dutch D 10
East German M 10
Finnish FM 10
French FF 10
German DM 3.00
Greek Dr 100
Hungarian H 100
Indian Rupee 100
Irish P 10
Italian L 1,000
Japanese Yen 100
Kazakhian K 100
Korean W 100
Latvian L 100
Lithuanian Lt 100
Luxembourgian F 100
Maltese M 10
Moldovan MD 10
Norwegian N 10
Polish Z 100
Portuguese P 200
Romanian R 100
Russian R 100
Slovakian S 100
Slovenian S 100
Spanish P 166
Swedish S 100
Swiss F 100
Tajikistani T 100
Tanzanian Sh 100
Thai Baht 100
Turkish TL 100
Ukrainian U 100
US Dollar 1.00

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INTERNATIONAL

NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

Results, reports, analysis

Sport

Pages 13-24



Tigress takes the stage

Peter Preston says:

Come back Lord Lucan

Comment, page 8

Charles Maxwell

Those radio times

Obituaries, page 10

Prudential in new sales row

Watchdog attacks pension tactics

Tony Levens

B RITAIN'S biggest life insurer, the Prudential, was at the centre of a new controversy last night after a Guardian investigation revealed it is continuing to attempt to mis-sell pensions.

The Prudential, already facing a bill of £1.1 billion to compensate customers to whom it had previously mis-sold pensions, came under fire from a leading industry watchdog following evidence that members of its sales force had tried to sell unsuitable pensions designed to maximise their commissions at the expense of investors.

When approached by Guardian investigators, Prudential agents:

- Attempted to sell policies that maximised earnings for both the salespeople and the company;
- Recommended poor value pensions;
- Quoted future growth figures based on the Financial Services Act and
- Showed potential customers deliberately misleading competitor statistics.

The Personal Investment Authority Ombudsman said: "On the evidence you have presented, the Prudential would all constitute mis-selling if cash had changed hands. A mis-sale is where an unnecessary, inappropriate or unsuitable product is recommended."

Independent actuary Mike Wadsworth, of Watson Wyatt Worldwide, said the plans put forward by the Prudential

were "quite disgraceful. It is quite clear that someone with uncertain earnings could find it impossible to keep up payments and would lose out heavily if they were to be sold one of these plans." Gillian Cook, at actuaries Bacon & Woodrow, said: "This preference for the regular premium over the lower cost plan does not sound like best advice for the self-employed in this position."

Guardian investigators posed as self-employed people with erratic earnings, typical of authors and actors who might earn £2,000 one year and four or five times that much in another 12-month period. Each of the investigators added that they had saved £3,000 in a bank account that they wanted to use to fund a pension.

Independent experts said the best advice would be to invest the lump sum in a single premium pension plan, a one-off purchase with low charges, whose terms and conditions did not depend on making subsequent payments. Keeping up a regular plan each month could be difficult for someone with an unreliable income.

In contravention of that best advice, the Prudential representatives advised signing up for a regular monthly premium contract even though they would have been difficult to pay during lean earnings spells. In a bad year, it would have been impossible to pay premiums, and Inland Revenue rules which govern the proportion of a person's earnings that can be contributed to a pension could have kicked in to limit the contribution. Opting for the regular



authority rulebook on future growth, which stipulates that all companies must quote of 9 per cent, less commission and other expenses. The PIA says this uniformity enables pensions buyers to make fair comparisons between companies and prevents salespeople dazzling potential buyers with outlandish growth rates that are unlikely to be fulfilled.

Prudential compliance officer Mario Burstin confirmed that this "statement should not have been made". A Prudential seller from Hertfordshire also showed one of our investigators highly selective figures that showed the Prudential at the top of a series of performance tables, ignoring major competitors such as Equitable Life, Virgin, and Eagle Star Direct, which all have lower costs.

Janet Walford, editor of Money Management magazine, which produces comprehensive personal pension statistics, said: "Our tables show the Prudential as average. No one should present figures which contrive to ignore many competitors."

The Prudential said: "The small print ensures legality. We have fully acknowledged the source of this material."

However, independent advisers say only insurance professionals would understand the nature of the sources quoted.

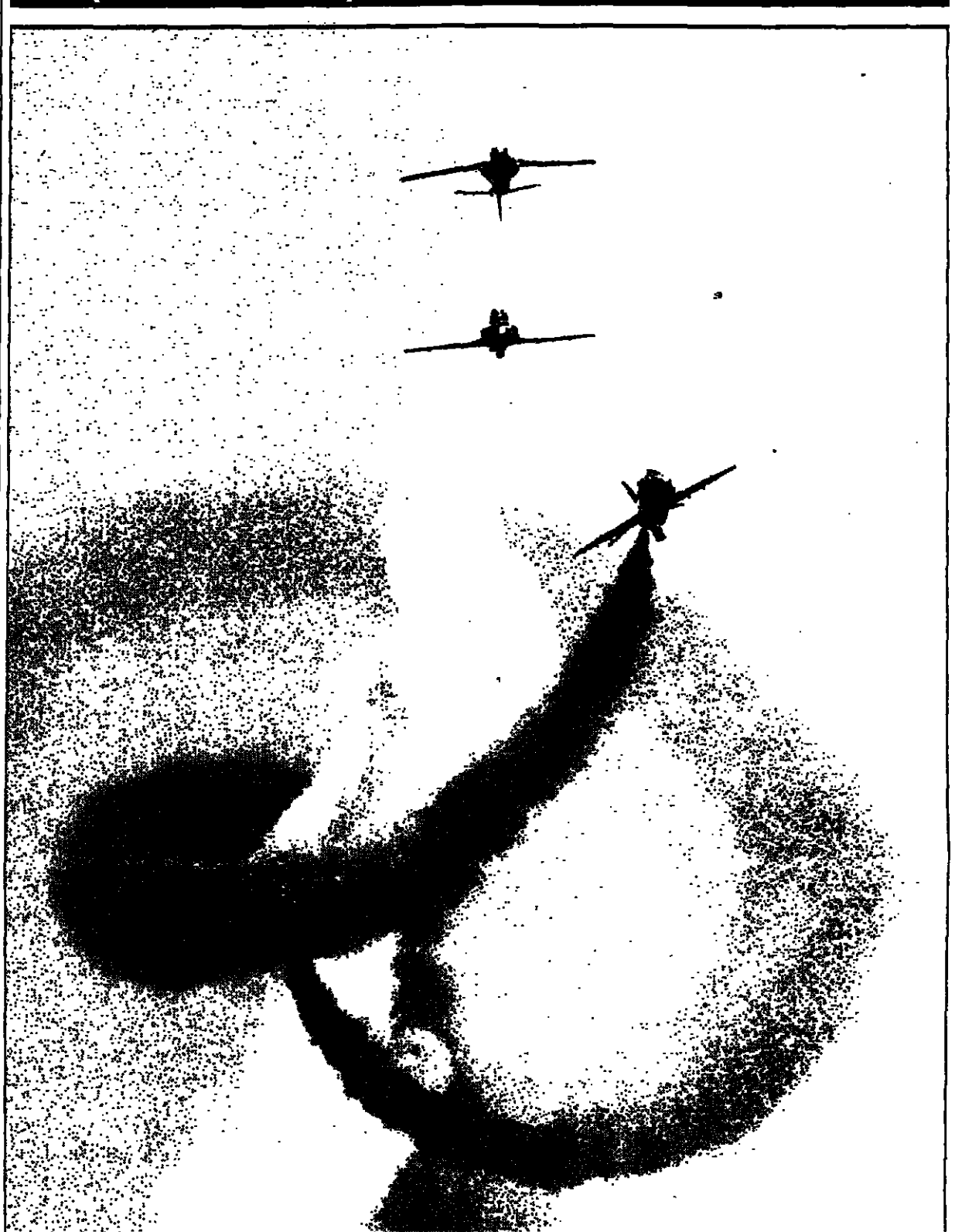
The Prudential has 9 million customers and some £119 billion of funds under management.

It has been criticised in wider terms. Key incidents include:

July 1996: Treasury select committee carpets Prudential for "cheating its customers".

December 1997: The PIA criticised the Prudential for selling unsuitable products and putting the company's interests before investors.

Red (white and blue) Arrows



The RAF's Red Arrows weaving a patriotic pattern at a Swiss air show yesterday PHOTOGRAPH: CHRISTOPH RUCKSTUHL

FBI studies video footage as blasts toll hits 184

Gary Younge in Washington and David Gough in Nairobi

I NVESTIGATORS leading the hunt for the group that mounted the devastating bomb attacks on two United States embassies in Kenya and Tanzania announced a potential breakthrough yesterday when they discovered they may have video footage of the bombers.

A security camera on top of the embassy in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, which pointed towards the seat of the explosion, may provide the FBI with crucial evidence. Attention there is being focused on a blue water tanker,

possibly carrying the bomb, which drew up to the embassy gates just before the blast.

The breakthrough came as President Bill Clinton vowed to avenge Friday's terror attacks and the death toll rose to almost 200.

"No matter how long it takes us, or where it takes us, we will pursue terrorists until the cases are solved and justice is done," Mr Clinton said in his radio address to the country.

Officials said 184 people, including 11 Americans, had been killed and more than 5,000 injured in the simultaneous attacks. All but 10 of the deaths occurred in Kenya

where 40 people remained unaccounted for last night.

Hopes dwindled that rescuers could save any more people trapped in a building in Nairobi levelled by the bomb, as forensic experts stepped up their investigation.

The Kenyan president, Daniel ar Moi, who toured the bomb site yesterday after attending a memorial service for the victims, said investigators were following a few leads in connection with the Nairobi blast.

Officials in the Clinton administration said initial investigations had yielded some clues but they refused to speculate openly about who might have committed the atrocities.

"There is information to work with but, obviously, I think it would not be wise to discuss specific information," said Mr Clinton's national security adviser, Sandy Berger.

A previously unknown Islamic group on Saturday claimed responsibility for the twin bombings and vowed more attacks to drive American and Western troops from Muslim countries.

It said the Nairobi bombing had been carried out by two men from Mecca, Saudi Arabia, while an Egyptian had staged the Dar-es-Salaam attack.

The group, calling itself the Islamic Army for the Liberation of Holy Places, did not mention the men's fate. It was

not immediately known whether US investigators gave credence to the claim.

In a strident radio address, Mr Clinton said the bombings would not affect US foreign policy. "To pull our diplomats and troops from the world's trouble spots, to turn our backs on those taking risks for peace, to weaken our opposition to terrorism, that would give terrorism a victory it must not and will not have," he said. "Instead we will continue to take the fight to the terrorists."

Early yesterday Israeli rescue workers and their sniffer dogs entered Nairobi's Co-operative Bank building. Kenyan police had searched

the building twice and declared it empty of survivors. But the Israelis emerged with a mother and her young son, unhurt but in deep shock.

Grace Odido and Gabriel, aged nine, were in the caretaker's office on the 17th floor of the 22-storey building when the blast hit. Grace's husband, the caretaker, had just left.

The streets outside the embassy yesterday remained covered in debris. Heaps of twisted vehicles were stacked on the pavement. Glass still carpeted the ground and bloodstains still scarred the walls of the bank.

Fastest cry, page 6; David Hirst, page 8



One of the mink recaptured in the aftermath of the raid

Fear in the forest as mink go on a killing spree

Helen Carter

T HE tawny owl never stood a chance, and nor did its cage-mate the kestrel. It was a bad night for the New Forest Owl Sanctuary.

The animal responsible for killing the two birds was not hard to spot: it was furry, had big teeth, and appeared rather confused. Which, in the circum-

stances, was hardly surprising.

Some 24 hours after they were liberated from a nearby farm, about 6,000 mink were causing mayhem in Hampshire yesterday.

The mink, freed by members of the Animal Liberation Front, had been living at Terence Smith's farm at Crow Hill, near Ringwood, on the edge of the New Forest. About 500 of the ani-

mals had been rounded up and returned to the Crow Hill Farm by last night, and several hundred more are believed to have been shot by gamekeepers or run over, but thousands are still on the loose.

Mink have been sighted in outbuildings, cars, hedgerows, and even in people's bedrooms. And wildlife within a 10-mile radius of the farm, meanwhile, has found itself cast

in the role of lunch. Despite barricading the aviaries, handlers at the New Forest Owl Sanctuary were powerless to save the owl and kestrel.

Perry Bright, a handler at the sanctuary, said: "We found the kestrel dead, then we found one of the mink on top of an owl shaking it. The manager got a gun and shot the mink."

Mr Smith, the mink farm owner, yesterday stood

looking at his 15 sheds. "My worry is that they will wade into the water and attack mallards, moorhens, coots, pheasants and partridges," he said.

Claiming responsibility for the raid, the ALF's spokesman, Robin Webb, admitted: "Regrettably, some mink will die, but liberating them gives them some form of freedom after their concentration camp conditions."

Inside

Britain

Buckingham Palace has been hit by a fire alarm. A fire in the Palace library was extinguished but the alarm was triggered by a faulty smoke detector.

World News

China's new president, Jiang Zemin, has visited the US. He met with President Clinton and Vice President Al Gore. The visit is seen as a sign of improved relations between the two countries.

Finance

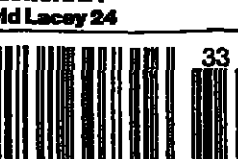
The jobless rate for mothers with young children is falling sharply as more firms adopt family-friendly policies.

Sport

The fifth and final Test was balanced on a knife-edge. England needed two wickets, South Africa just 34 runs. Sport broadsheet.

Weather 4; Obituaries 10; Comment 9; Crossword 11

Sport: Crossword 24; David Lacey 24



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MPs damn easy profits on rail sell-off

Tory government failed to write clawback clause into deals that made managers multi-millionaires

Ewen MacAskill, Chief Political Correspondent

THE most powerful of the Commons select committees yesterday issued a damning verdict on rail privatisation which saw a handful of former British Rail managers become multi-millionaires within months.

The Public Affairs Committee, in a long list of complaints about the sell-off, concluded there should have been a method for the Government to clawed back a share of profits.

Three companies responsible for rolling-stock were sold off in January and February 1996 for £1.8 billion. By December 1997, all three had been sold for £2.7 billion, an increase of 50 per cent.

The most notorious case was Sandy Anderson, who made £33 million in six months.

The MPs on the cross-party committee said: "Such large profits risk discrediting privatisation as a whole. The public are understandably concerned when they see a small number of individuals making personal fortunes at a time when complaints about the industry are rising and many in the industry as losing their jobs."

The chairman of the committee, David Davis, was a member of the then Tory government responsible for rushing through rail privatisation. But he said yesterday: "I am not embarrassed. You have to be iron-hard in impartiality [as chairman of a select committee]. If something is done badly, it is done badly."

He added that civil servants should have given stronger advice to the government about a clawback mechanism. The taxpayers might not have got back £500 million but they would have got back "enough

Quick returns

Original purchase price of the companies compared with the price when sold on, and the profits made

Company	Bought for	Sold for	Profit
Porterbrook	£520m	£820m	£300m
Evereholt	£510m	£720m	£210m
Angel	£390m	£1,085m	£695m

Sold in three stages

Sandy Anderson is a former BR terminal manager, who became managing director of Porterbrook after a management/employee buy-out. He was helped with finance by the Charterhouse Bank — his personal investment was £120,000 and he pocketed £33 million from the sale of Porterbrook (responsible for rolling-stock) to Stagecoach six months later.

Andrew Jules led a management/employee consortium which bought Evereholt from the Government. He invested £110,000 — and made a personal profit of £16 million when Evereholt was sold to Forward Trust Group (part of Midland Bank) a year later. Mr Jules, who earned about £70,000 as a BR employee, still advises Forward Trust.

John Pridmore, a senior BR director who left to set up his own consultancy, became chairman of Angel. He did not use his own money for the rail purchase — the cash came from the Japanese investment bank Nomura. He made a personal profit of £15 million when it was sold on to the Royal Bank of Scotland and he remains a director of Angel.

Guy Hands is a financial wizard at Nomura. The profit from the sale turned him into the highest-paid executive in Britain, with an expected bonus of £40 million. He began wheeling and dealing in his student days at Oxford. From university, he joined Goldman Sachs and went on to Nomura, which has a diverse portfolio in Britain, including more than 6,000 pubs.

to pay for a few hospitals."

The transport department published proposals for privatisation in 1992 and legislation followed in 1993. British Rail was reorganised into almost 100 businesses.

As part of this, three rolling-stock leasing companies were established to take over ownership of the trains, and were put out to tender. In January 1996, the first of them, Porterbrook, was bought by a management/employee con-

sortium for £520 million and sold on to Stagecoach in August 1996 for £820 million, a gain of £300 million.

The second, Evereholt, was bought by a management/employee consortium, for £510 million in February 1996 and sold to the Forward Trust Group for £720 million a year later, with a gain of £210 million.

The third, Angel, was bought in January 1996 for £390 million by GRS, an exter-

nal bidder. GRS sold off some of the business soon after and the remainder to the Royal Bank of Scotland in December 1997. The value was £1.1 billion, a gain of £395 million.

The committee, criticising the transport department said: "We consider that the department should have considered carefully at an early stage in the sale process the case for taking clawback provisions allowing the government to share in profits

made if the companies were sold on, and recorded that consideration."

Other points in the report included:
 □ Bidders said they would not have been deterred by such a clawback;
 □ The department failed to carry out an up-to-date valuation before final bids;
 □ The government's advisers, Hambros, failed to pursue external bidders thoroughly and eventually

relied on management/employee buy-outs.

On the latter point, the committee expressed concern that Stagecoach was apparently put off from bidding initially by Hambros, who, the firm said, told it that the business would be sold for much more than was eventually the case. The committee noted that Hambros denied this.

The transport department, part of Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott's super-

department since May last year, said yesterday it would consider the committee's findings and report back.

Conservative Central Office was reluctant to comment because it was a Tory select committee chairman criticising a Tory government. But a spokesman said: "Rail privatisation has been a resounding success. Even the Labour Party admits it was successful. The benefits are coming through now."

Men 'too tall' for job in factory sue food firm for sex bias

Seumas Milne, Labour Editor

AN American-owned food firm which makes processed meats for Tesco, McDonald's, and other leading retailers today faces accusations of sex discrimination at an industrial tribunal from two Hereford men who say they were turned down for jobs because they were too tall.

Lincoln Dodd, who is 6ft 8in, and Barry Seal, 6ft 5in, were rejected for factory work by Sun Valley Foods at its two Hereford plants last winter. The two maintain height restrictions discrimi-

'It brought back all my childhood psychological problems'

nate against men because women are on average smaller.

The company insists that the two men, who are backed by the Citizens' Advice Bureau, were not turned away because of their height, but because their "very long spines" — in relation to their femurs — made them more likely to suffer from back injuries while working on the production line.

However, internal Sun Valley recruitment screening guidelines state that applicants over 6ft 5in should be automatically rejected, while those between 6ft 5in and 6ft 8in should be referred to the company's occupational health doctor.

The link between height restrictions and sex discrimination has been established in other cases. The police and fire service have moved away from their traditional minimum height requirements.

The most recent health department statistics show that 12 per cent of men, but only 0.1 per cent of women, are over 6ft.

Mr Dodd, aged 27, said yesterday that his spine was never measured when he went for a job as a "prep operative" at Sun Valley last December — although his height was measured.

The job, which he had done before without any back problems, involved mixing, weighing and loading chicken and other meats in preparation for the production line.

"They just said I was too tall," he said. "My height was a real problem as a kid, and when I was 11 or 12 I even asked my mum and dad if I could have an operation to stop growing. My mum said I'd be glad when I was older. But when I was turned down for the Sun Valley job, it brought back all those childhood psychological problems."

Martin Wiberley, human resources director at Sun Valley, owned by the US multinational Cargill and Hereford's largest employer, said the company's approach was "simply that of a responsible employer" aiming to avoid employee injury. "If you are more than 6ft 5in, it's likely you are so tall you will damage yourself doing the job," he added.

Karl Shutt, of Hereford Citizens' Advice Bureau, who will be representing the two men at today's industrial tribunal hearing, pointed out that Mr Dodd was a rugby player with more than enough muscle bulk to support his frame and Sun Valley was effectively saying he was too tall for manual work. Both men had worked for Sun Valley in the past.

Other companies were watching the progress of the Sun Valley case to see whether they could impose height restrictions on their workforces, Mr Shutt added.



Lincoln Dodd at home: 'Refusal brought back psychological problems' PHOTOGRAPH BY JEFF MORGAN

No room at the inn in any weather for stuff like this

Review

Lyn Gardner

The Pleasance, Edinburgh Fringe

THIS year's Edinburgh Fringe has started its programme a full week early. With companies participating from all over the world, the fruits of global co-operation are already on view in every church hall and broom cupboard that Edinburgh has to offer.

One of the most curious collaborations comes from the mask and mime company Trestle, a popular fringe stalwart which has spent the last three years engaged in the project with the Kherson Theatre of the Ukraine.

The result is a piece which differs from much of Trestle's

other work by its sheer volume of words. Mind you, these are not any words, but a completely made-up gobbledygook language with a strong eastern European slant, whose meaning is conveyed entirely through inflection.

Created so that British and Ukrainian actors, neither of whom spoke the other's language, could rehearse together, it should be a truly international method of communication.

In fact, in performance the surfeit of spoken language detracts from what Trestle does best — speaking through body language and the expressive inexpressiveness of the mask.

The problem is compounded by the complications of the narrative, in which two blind puppets such up on a stormy night at a local inn. They offer to perform their puppet show in return for food and shelter.

But neither they nor their marionettes are quite who or what they seem, and the wheels and cogs of a compli-

cated revenge and reconciliation drama begin to engage over the next 90 minutes.

The show, inspired by the paintings of Peter Brueghel, always looks great, but overall the piece lacks the visual inventiveness, humour and sharpness of previous works, as well as the company's hallmark of being able to make you laugh at the sheer ugliness of the human condition.

There are some good moments, particularly as the puppets begin to take over the plot and the town's dastardly mayor gets cut right down to size. But for quite a lot of the time I simply didn't know what was going on or why, and I can only tell you on the programme's authority that the story is supposed to be about power, love and the struggle for independence.

After last year's excellent Fool House, this is evidence that even with a company of Trestle's track record, there is really no such thing as a dead cert on the Edinburgh Fringe.

The skyjack that wasn't

James Meek on some strange goings-on at a Moscow airport

THE stage was set yesterday for a grand hostage drama at one of the Russian capital's main airports — a hijacked Siberian aircraft with 97 passengers trapped on board, a bomb primed to go off if a ransom was not paid, negotiators and armed vehicles stuffed with black-masked special forces troops at the ready.

Everything was in place — except the principal actors.

In a violation of one of the cardinal rules of hijacking, there weren't any hijackers.

Russia's security forces

have never let metaphysical questions get in the way of their constant search for danger and excitement. Frustrated by the non-existence of terrorists with whom to negotiate an end to the emergency that wasn't, security officials opened talks with the next most competent person on board the plane.

"All negotiations were with the pilot," said security chief Alexander Sopov. The flap at Domodedovo airport began when crew members aboard a Tupolev airliner, flying from Tyumen in Siberia, discovered a note in Eastline Airlines' business class warning there was a bomb on board.

"We will detonate it if we are not given \$21,000 roubles (about \$55,000). We need the money in Moscow," read the note. It was not signed and none of the passengers has owned up to

writing it. No bomb was found on the plane. With 27 women and children allowed off as the emergency wound down, the 70 remaining male passengers were understood to be submitting to handwriting tests.

The fact that the note asked the authorities to place the money in five envelopes in the Tupolev's toilet suggests five Siberian chancers may have dreamed up the scheme before deciding that silence was the better part of valour. The message also demanded that passengers be allowed to leave the airport without being checked.

Hijackings of domestic airliners and even buses are not uncommon in Russia, with desperate Siberians apparently undaunted by the fact that as a money-making crime it has demonstrated zero returns.

Foster's bridge defeats plateau's defender

Laser bent to

Razish star

"She could grip could hit shots airborne."

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Paul Webster on the threat a structure higher than the Eiffel Tower poses to a wilderness in south-west France

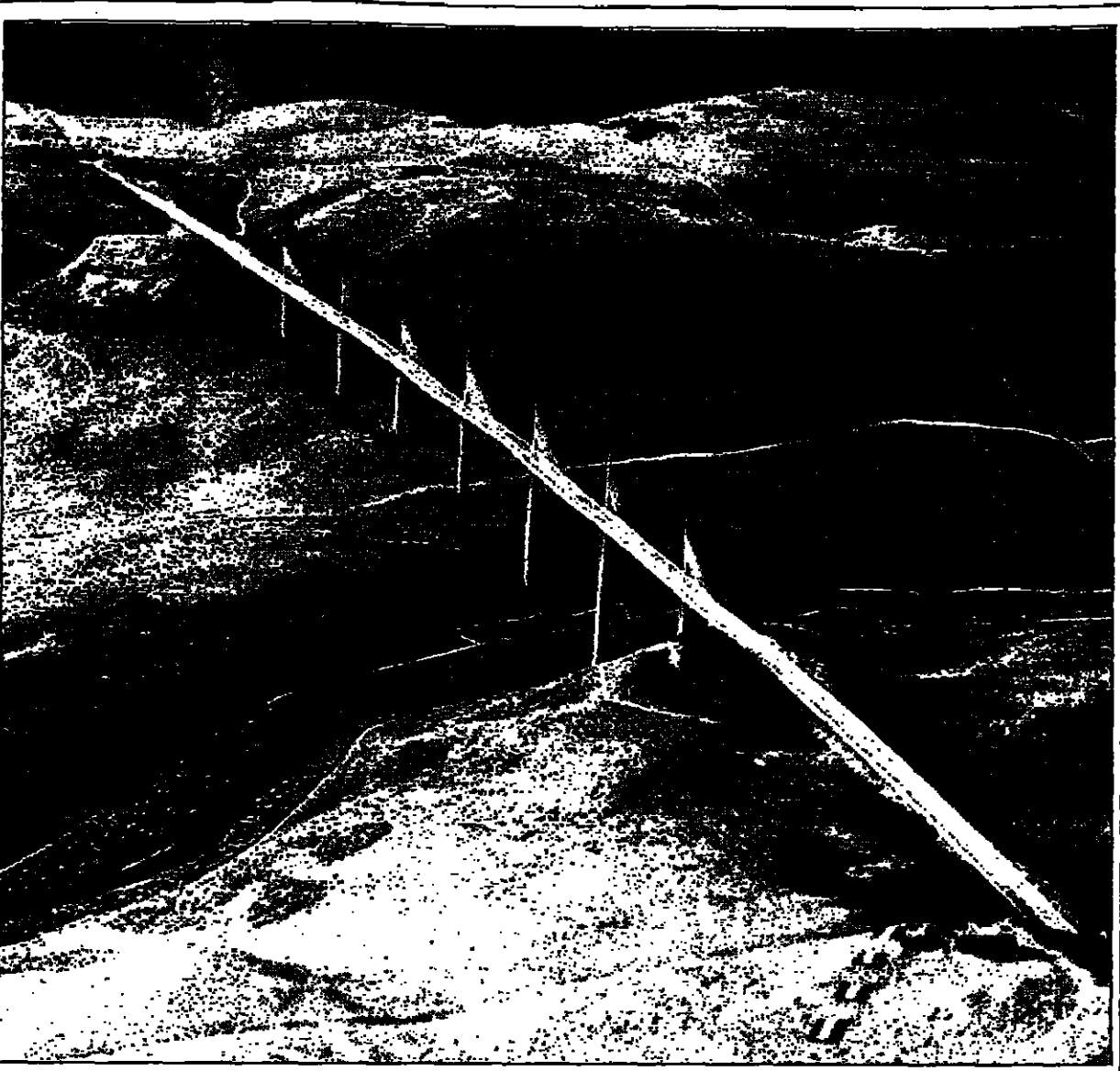
Foster's bridge defeats plateau's defenders

FRENCH environmentalists have lost their battle to stop construction of a gigantic British-designed road bridge that threatens to change the face of the wild Lézarde plateau, the scene of an epic victory by the ecological movement over the army, who wanted to turn it into an artillery range.

The 1.5 mile-long bridge, designed by Sir Norman Foster, will span the Tarn river valley at Millau, where the road from the north plunges nearly 1,000ft before climbing out on the southern side into an unspoilt area of south-western France.

To complete a north-south motorway, Sir Norman's structure, supported by seven monumental pillars, will be longer than the Channel Tunnel and higher than the Eiffel Tower.

The plan, hailed as the last great European engineering challenge of the century, is a dismal news for Alain Desjardins, the left-wing militant who organised protests of 100,000 marchers on the Lézarde plateau during the 1970s. After 10 years of often violent demon-



A model of Sir Norman Foster's bridge design, hailed as the last great European engineering challenge of the century

strations, the 1981 Socialist-led government scuppered the plan to turn hundreds of thousands of acres of pasture into tank and artillery training grounds.

Only two years ago Lézarde, a stretch of bleak moorland with barely two inhabitants for each square mile, was classified as a nature reserve, but the move to protect its unique plant and bird life came to nothing.

Today Mr Desjardins' farm looks out onto a newly completed stretch of motorway that slashes across the plateau, in place of the cancelled link with Sir Norman's bridge.

As local leader of Les Verts (The Greens) and a friend of the environment minister, Mr Desjardins had hoped the bridge would be cancelled after the left's election win last year, ending the threat of heavy traffic on the unfinished link in the A75 autoroute from Clermont-Ferrand to Beziers.

Instead the Communist minister, Jean-Claude Gaxiot, this month overruled objections in a confidential memo and agreed to

hand over the building and management of the bridge to a private consortium.

A public inquiry will be held next month to examine the introduction of tolls on what is now a free road, but the project is still scheduled to be completed by 2003.

Mr Desjardins, aged 53, is a veteran of successful campaigns against nuclear testing and the Rhine-Rhone canal.

way will cause serious pollution and change the traditional way of life of an isolated community," he said.

"Politicians on both left and right have kept up an incessant propaganda campaign for years on supposed economic and tourist opportunities from the bridge.

"This is one of France's poorest areas with an ageing population who seem to be

restaurants and shopping centres would attract 500,000 visitors a year and create 400 jobs.

For opponents who include Robert Roussel, a Millau councillor and businessman, the economic prospects are an illusion while the eventual cost will be at least four times the estimated \$150 million.

Supporters see the project as a work of art, but it only brings swarms to the faces of the handful of shepherds and farmers on the high plateau. Among those who have settled in the Lézarde is Marie-Louise Dupesquier, a former star basketball player, whose isolated, stone-roofed farmhouse stands a few yards from a dirt track.

"I retired here to live in perfect peace," she said, looking across the plain where the only sounds were a summer breeze and the bees in the lavender.

"Now the track in front of the house has been expropriated as the route for a motorway. No one thought of knocking the house down because officials saw it as a rural museum in the centre of a service area."

grounds is bound to be disturbed for ever."

The bridge will arch across empty land, rising steadily in altitude from about 2,000ft to 2,500ft as it crosses the Tarn valley for 1.7 miles; its cable-stayed superstructure giving the impression of a flocilla in sail along a roadway 900ft above the riverbed.

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"Now the track in front of the house has been expropriated as the route for a motorway. No one thought of knocking the house down because officials saw it as a rural museum in the centre of a service area."

Cook says MI6 bomb plot claim is fantasy

RICHARD NORTON-TAYLOR

LABOUR MP's yesterday expressed growing disquiet about allegations of MI6 involvement in a plot to assassinate the Libyan leader, Colonel Muammar Gaddafi, despite government attempts to dismiss the claims outright by insisting there was no evidence that such an operation had been officially sanctioned.

In his first public comments on the allegations that surfaced more than a week ago, Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, described reports of the alleged plot as "pure fantasy."

He said he was "absolutely satisfied" that Sir Malcolm Rifkind, his predecessor, had not authorised it.

He said: "I'm perfectly satisfied that SIS [the Secret Intelligence Service, more commonly known as MI6] never put forward any such proposal for an assassination attempt. Nor have I seen anything in the 15 months I have been in the job which would suggest that SIS has any interest, any role or any experience over the decades of any such escapade."

But, apparently using carefully chosen words, Mr Cook added: "There was no government-inspired plan to assassinate Gaddafi. There was no SIS proposal to do it, and I'm fairly clear there has never been any SIS involvement."

A senior Labour source who declined to be named said yesterday that while he did not believe the plot had been authorised, it appeared that "something happened". He referred to the possibility of "some oddball operation".

Other well-placed sources said Mr Cook's dismissal of the allegations did not explain why government lawyers had been locked for more than 48 hours in talks with the BBC thrashing out what could be included, and what details omitted, from a Panorama investigation into allegations made by the former MI6 officer, David Shayler.

The programme, broadcast on Friday night, included an interview with Mr Shayler in which he gave further details of alleged MI6 involvement in a 1996 plot to assassinate Col Gaddafi through one of its

Arab agents — codenamed Tunworth — who had links with a militant Islamic group.

The time devoted by the BBC and Whitehall to the precise content of the programme, and to new information obtained independently by the BBC, suggests there is more to the allegations than Mr Cook implied yesterday.

Annie Machon, Mr Shayler's girlfriend who also worked for MI6, told BBC Television's Breakfast With Frost programme: "I think they [the Government] are so touchy because they realise what he's saying is true. He headed up the Libyan section in MI6 for over two years, so he was very well informed about all matters relating to Libya."

He also managed to develop a particularly good working relationship with his opposite number in MI6 and I gather that is how he found out the details of the plot to kill Gaddafi," she said.

John Wadham, Mr Shayler's lawyer and director of the civil rights group, Liberty, yesterday said Mr Shayler had never alleged that Sir Malcolm Rifkind had known about the plot to kill Col Gaddafi. "The allegation by David Shayler was that MI6 officers were involved in the Gaddafi plot," he said.

Mr Wadham said part of the allegation was that this plan had not been authorised as it should have been under the relevant legislation. "There's no surprise that Robin Cook says it wasn't authorised," he said.

He called for a judicial inquiry "to satisfy us all of the truth or otherwise of David's allegations".

Clive Soley, chairman of the Parliamentary Labour Party, told BBC Radio there was a problem with the secrecy surrounding the parliamentary Intelligence and Security Committee — in particular over the balance between parliamentary accountability and the protection of intelligence personnel and operations.

"I'm not sure we have got that right," he said.

Mr Shayler was arrested in Paris on August 1 and is in prison pending extradition to Britain where he faces charges under the Official Secrets Act.

Laser bent to rail safety needs

Drivers could see round curves to spot hazards ahead or behind

Tim Radford Science Editor

SCIENTISTS have come up with a revolutionary laser system which will allow train drivers to see round corners and through tunnels. The system will help a driver to view the entire platform, on a screen mounted in his cab, 100 yards before he arrives at a station — and for 100 yards after he has pulled out.

If widely adopted, the technology could prevent thousands of minor accidents each year, and a few major ones. The design — for an unnamed foreign railway customer — will also mean that the driver can watch precious or sensitive cargoes being loaded.

The screen will show passengers getting on and off along the entire reach of a curved platform. And if there is any danger from something unexpected on the track, it could also provide warning in time for the driver to stop.

The system has just been tested on a banked track and a curved platform in Wales, according to the journal Opto And Laser Europe.

The designers, Vector Technology, of Abertillery in Gwent, have already provided curved laser beam "safety rails" for parts of highways in Italy. "In the Dolomites, they have foggy days and sheer mountains where people were driving off the road because they couldn't see the edge," said Terry Lockey, the firm's operations director.

A new laser system produced a red "hand rail" between posts along the edge of the road. "When there is fog in the atmosphere, you can see the projected laser beam," said Mr Lockey. "As you are driving along, it looks like a red rail running around the side of the road."

Engineers working on the rail project have employed laser transmitters and a newly patented way of manipulating the light beam to cut energy losses. The images from two cameras — one looking in each direction along a platform — are directed to a split screen in the driver's cab.

"If there was a fire on the platform the driver could either stop the train from entering the station, or he could take the train through the station without stopping," Mr Lockey said. "It's not a panacea, but it is another aid to the driver to do what is a difficult job."

By using lasers rather than radio or microwave, the rail

way can broadcast images without a licence, without interference, and without fading or "ghosting". The engineers devised holographic lenses to shape the light beam and help keep the strength of the signal steady even though the receiver is moving at speed.

The system, called OptaLink, can transmit two channels of information simultaneously, and could transmit up to four. It could be used wherever there is a need for wireless communication over a short range.

"The breakthrough allows free space communications not only from fixed point to fixed point, but also between a fixed point and a moving point," said Ken Owen, managing director of Vector Technology. "It is the first commercial laser system to be developed which is easy to set up, provides reliable communications and uses laser emissions which are safe."

Razor fish start panic on the beach

Amelia Gentieman

ASHOAL of razor fish wrought havoc on a crowded beach yesterday, slashing the feet of about 800 holidaymakers paddling in the sea.

Thousands of tourists, making the most of the hottest weekend of the year, had to be evacuated from the area.

Swimmers with blood pouring from their lacerated feet limped off the sands at Paignton and Preston beaches at Torbay, Devon, as coastguard officials and police rallied to help ambulance staff in treating the injured.

The beaches were immediately evacuated and the surrounding roads sealed off. But hundreds had already been injured by the sharp fish shells, which had been exposed by the unusually low tide.

Torbay council beach manager Brian Pearce said: "I have never seen anything like it."

Lawrence Parker, receptionist at a Paignton hotel, said: "The beach was packed one minute and abandoned the next."

Other people encountered more mundane problems as they sought to bask in the sun which shone over much of Britain this weekend.

With temperatures reaching peaks of around 30 Centigrade in the South-west of England and Wales, thousands of drivers ignored warnings of congestion in coastal areas and took to the road.

Forecasters yesterday predicted two more days of true summer weather in most parts of Britain before the drizzle sets in again.

Weather, page 4

"She could grip the club perfectly and she could hit shots. She could get the ball airborne."

David Davies heralds the arrival of Se Ri Pak

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Palace frets over Harry's 'risky' abseil

Amelia Gentleman

TIGGY Legge-Bourke, the former nanny of Prince Harry, yesterday said she had allowed Prince Harry to abseil down a dam in Wales without a safety helmet.

The palace has launched an internal inquiry, and a spokeswoman said that climbing experts would be consulted to assess whether the prince had been at risk when he descended the 160ft face without a helmet or a back-up safety harness. Experienced climbers have condemned the descent as "foolhardy".

Miss Legge-Bourke, aged 32, who is responsible for the prince's education during school holidays when the Prince of Wales is working, took them abseiling a week ago near her parents' home in Crickhowell, Powys.

Prince Harry's walk down a sheer face of the dam wall in the remote Afon Horddu Valley was photographed by a passing family; the pictures appeared in a newspaper yesterday.

Although he was not caught on camera, it was understood that William, aged 16, also made the descent at the remote Gwynedd Fawr dam, in the Black Mountains, Powys.

Prince Harry, aged 13, was kitted out with ropes and a safety harness before he set off, but pictures show him without a helmet or a back-up rope held by an instructor — both routine precautions.

It was unclear whether the Prince of Wales, who was in France at the time, had given his sons permission to go abseiling. A Buckingham Palace

spokeswoman said she was unable to go into details because of privacy issues, but conceded: "He would have been aware that they were with Tiggy Legge-Bourke, but he wouldn't necessarily have been aware that they were abseiling and certainly not that they were abseiling in the way that the pictures show."

"The photographs have raised a serious issue of safety. There are a lot of questions that need to be asked and a lot of people that need to be spoken to. There needs to be a post-mortem, but it won't be done in public."

"We are told that he should have been wearing a helmet and should have had a double harness. We are grateful that this has been drawn to our attention and we will be making our own inquiries."

A special permit is normally required from Welsh Water which operates the reservoir to attempt the drop, and abseilers have to sign an indemnity in case of injury.

Carl Durham, co-owner of the nearby Black Mountain activity centre, commented: "Not to use a helmet while abseiling is foolhardy because it is crucial equipment. I am surprised Prince Harry was allowed to go down the dam without a helmet — and without a separate safety line held by an instructor."

Alan Ward, who trains climbers in the Brecon Beacons, said: "A safety helmet is a must. After all, you have only one skull and one brain inside it."

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents said it recommends abseilers to wear a helmet at all times. "We like to see people in the public eye setting a good example."



Prince Harry: descended 160ft dam without helmet

Council concerned over mother's ability to cope

Gerard Seanan

A PARALYSED pregnant woman is facing the prospect of having her child taken from her at birth because social workers fear she may be unable to look after it.

Penny Roberts, of Steeton, West Yorkshire, became pregnant in January, but her fiancé, the father of the child,

has since left her and Bradford social services are now deciding whether it would be best for the baby to remain with her or be cared for elsewhere.

Ms Roberts, aged 35, was paralysed in a sky-diving accident in Florida three years ago. She fell 15,000ft after her parachute failed to open and her emergency chute became entangled. The accident left her quadriplegic and she now

requires the help of three carers.

She has asked Bradford council to supply another carer to help her with the baby, leaving social workers with the difficult task of balancing her rights with those of the child.

Mike Stow, Bradford council's assistant social services director, said no decision would be made before a detailed assessment had been

carried out. "We must look at all options while considering the wishes and care needs of Penny, who would be a long parent without family support, and the best interests of the child."

Ms Roberts' accident left her unable to move her legs and nine of her fingers, though she can move her arms enough to feed herself using specially designed equipment.

Bradford social services said they had worked with Ms Roberts for more than two years. Caring for her, however, is expensive. Current weekly costs run at £500, which are met from a £200-a-week social services grant and £300 a week from a government fund. A council spokesman said costs could double when the baby is born.

Ms Roberts was unavailable for comment yesterday.

Prince hires a lobbyist's aide for private office

David Hencke
Westminster Correspondent

THE Prince of Wales is to pay a firm run by the lobbyist Sir Tim Bell nearly £200,000 over the next three years to hire one of his senior staff to work in his private office with access to the heart of St James's Palace.

Elizabeth Buchanan, a former press secretary to Lady Thatcher and political advisor to Cecil Parkinson, now Tory party chairman, will remain on the lobbyist's payroll while working as assistant private secretary to Prince Charles. Her appointment, from October 1, is the first time a commercial lobbyist has been seconded to work for the royal household.

Confidential papers obtained by the Guardian reveal that Prince Charles's private secretary, Stephen Lamport, has signed an extraordinary deal with Sir Tim over her appointment.

Under it the prince will reimburse Sir Tim for his private income over three years some £165,000 of her salary and £25,700 contribution towards her national insurance payments and pension.

Sir Tim will be subsidising the prince by paying £25,000 a year towards her £50,000 a year salary, providing her with a company car, BUPA life insurance, permanent health insurance and the rest

of her pension contributions. She will keep executive and company-related share options and be entitled to a profit related company bonus while working in St James's Palace.

According to the official St James's Palace announcement, Ms Buchanan's work for the prince will include looking after his charities such as the Prince's Trust and Business in the Community. Her portfolio will also include the Prince of Wales's interests in the environment, industry, commerce, housing and the homeless.

These areas will require access to state and cabinet papers and also information on regular private meetings the prince has with ministers such as Peter Mandelson, the Trade and Industry Secretary.

A Cabinet Office spokesman said: "Cabinet and state papers, including papers from cabinet committees, are regularly sent to the offices of the Queen and the Prince of Wales so they can be kept up to date on government business."

A private letter from Mr Lamport to Sir Tim reveals that Ms Buchanan is to be "positively vetted" for the job. If her posting is successful, "our expectation is that Elizabeth's appointment will be extended by mutual agreement, and on the same terms we have agreed at the outset, for a third year," he says.

Last night disclosure of the

details of the deal led to condemnation from Rhodri Morgan, the Labour chairman of the Commons public administration committee.

"I am astonished about the laxity surrounding the arrangements, which allow an employee of a Tory peer to get access to government papers while working for the royal household," he said.

He should be writing writing immediately to Sir Richard Wilson, the Cabinet Secretary, asking him to investigate the propriety of such an appointment.

Ms Buchanan, aged 36, played a key role in the Conservative 1987 and 1992 general election victories.

She prepared briefings for Lady Thatcher in 1987 and was her campaign manager in the 1992 election campaign, later accompanying the former prime minister on her American and Canadian tours promoting her autobiography.

A spokeswoman for St James's Palace said yesterday: "Elizabeth Buchanan was the best candidate for the job. We are making a contribution to her salary but the details are a matter for Bell Pottinger. We have had previous secondments from other organisations like Barclays and S4C [the state funded Welsh Language Channel]."

In neither case did Barclays or S4C receive any money from the Buckingham Palace.

Merit awards checked

Sarah Bosley
Health Correspondent

A RADICAL overhaul of the way hospital consultants are paid, giving patients more say, is expected to be announced today.

Briefings from politicians suggested that changes were in order following public outcry that James Whitworth, the children's cardiac surgeon struck off the General Medical Council register at the end of the Bristol babies' case, received an A merit award while inquiries were going on, and continues to receive it even now.

It was said yesterday that patient groups would be represented on a slimmed-down awards committee. But doctors were left wondering how this would lead to fundamental change in what they see as not a grace and favour hand-out but part of their pay structure.

The system was designed shortly after the birth of the NHS to top up basic pay for the best hospital doctors.

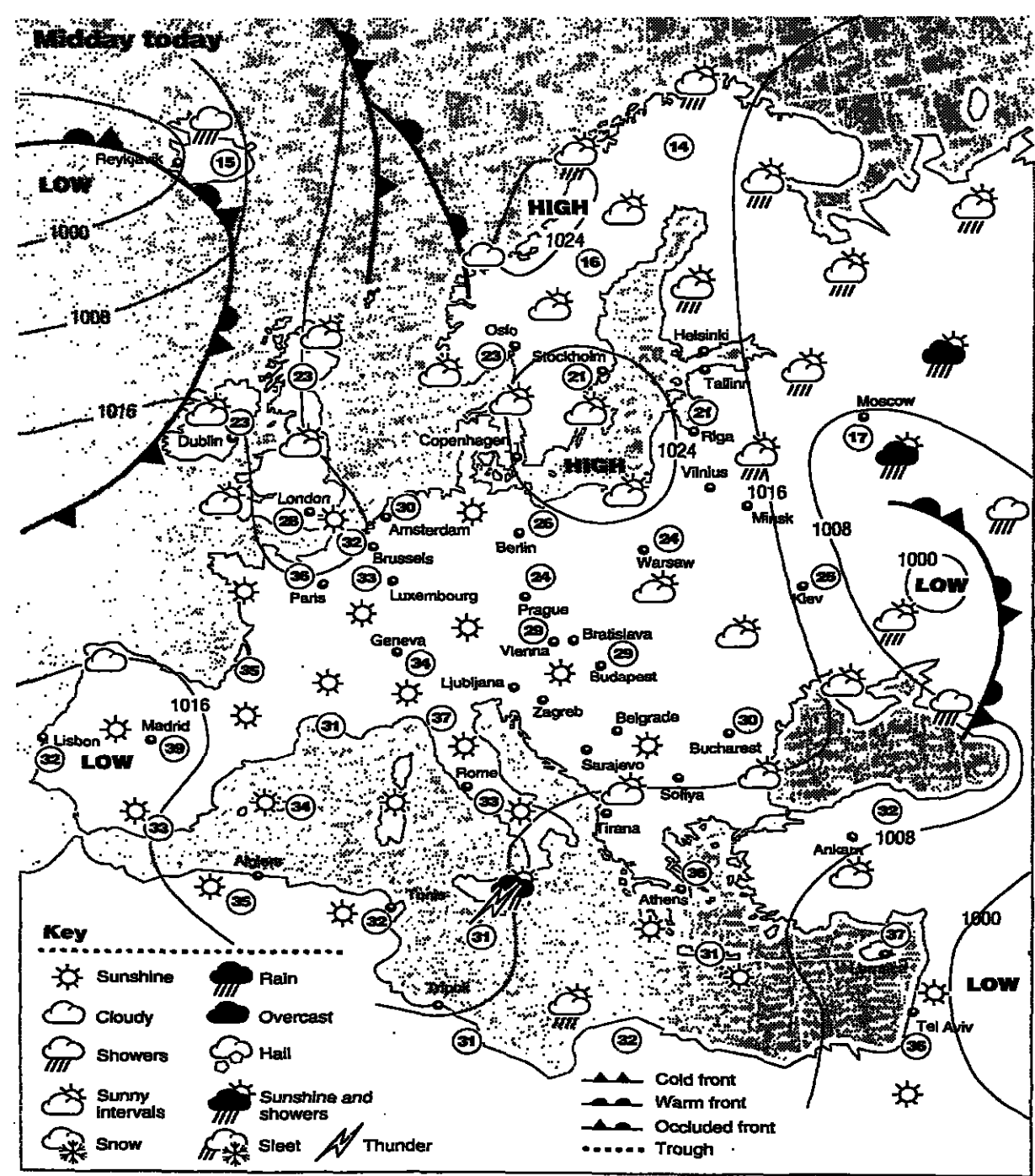
The basic consultant's salary starts at £24,780. It rises annually in five stages to £27,000. Beyond that, they have to convince the advisory committee on distinction awards that they have reached higher levels of excellence. Only about 3,000 out of

25,000 consultants get an A+, A or B merit award. A+ is worth £54,910 a year, nearly doubling the basic pay for an experienced consultant to over £112,000.

There has been some reform of the awards system already because of suspicions that it was unfair. Award holders' names were not published. Doctors had to be nominated by their peers, which led to cronyism, and doctors from ethnic minorities were under-represented.

Sir Christopher Payne, the medical director of the advisory committee, has been tackling racial discrimination at the request of Alan Milburn, the health minister.

The weather in Europe



Forecast for the cities			
Today	tomorrow	Wednesday	Thursday
London 22-28 S	London 24-20 S	London 23-19 S	London 21-13 S
Manchester 20-26 S	Manchester 22-18 S	Manchester 21-15 S	Manchester 19-11 S
Birmingham 21-27 S	Birmingham 23-19 S	Birmingham 22-16 S	Birmingham 20-12 S
Cardiff 20-26 S	Cardiff 22-18 S	Cardiff 21-15 S	Cardiff 19-11 S
Edinburgh 20-26 S	Edinburgh 22-18 S	Edinburgh 21-15 S	Edinburgh 19-11 S
Glasgow 20-26 S	Glasgow 22-18 S	Glasgow 21-15 S	Glasgow 19-11 S
Leeds 21-27 S	Leeds 23-19 S	Leeds 22-16 S	Leeds 20-12 S
Liverpool 21-27 S	Liverpool 23-19 S	Liverpool 22-16 S	Liverpool 20-12 S
Nottingham 21-27 S	Nottingham 23-19 S	Nottingham 22-16 S	Nottingham 20-12 S
Sheffield 21-27 S	Sheffield 23-19 S	Sheffield 22-16 S	Sheffield 20-12 S
Southampton 21-27 S	Southampton 23-19 S	Southampton 22-16 S	Southampton 20-12 S
Stoke 21-27 S	Stoke 23-19 S	Stoke 22-16 S	Stoke 20-12 S
Wolverhampton 21-27 S	Wolverhampton 23-19 S	Wolverhampton 22-16 S	Wolverhampton 20-12 S

European outlook

Scandinavia
Finland and northern parts of Sweden and Norway will have a mixture of sunny spells and scattered showers. Elsewhere in Scandinavia will be mainly dry with some long sunny spells although it will be rather cloudy along western coasts of Norway. Max temps ranging from 24C (75F) in the south to 16C (61F) in the north. Low Countries, Germany, Austria, Switzerland
A foggy start to the day in many parts of the north, but clearing by the middle of the morning then it will be a sunny day everywhere. Max temps 30-34C (86-93F) but 24-27C (75-81F) in Germany and north coasts.

France
Early morning fog will be generally quick to clear and then it will become hot with mostly sunny skies. Seas breezes will develop along coasts but inland there will be little or no wind. Max temps 31-36C (88-97F).

Spain and Portugal
Foggy at times towards Atlantic coasts of Spain where a little rain is possible. Elsewhere will however see little the evening. Showers in Italy will be dry and sunny. Max temps 32-36C (90-97F) but 27-30C (81-86F) in some inland parts.

Greece
Some cloud in the north and west but this will be thin allowing some decent sun throughout. Slightly cooler in the east. Max temps 31-36C (88-97F) but a little cooler along coasts.

Thursdays showers over the top of Italy and Sicily but also some sunshine with the showers tending to die away towards the evening. Showers in Italy will be dry and sunny. Max temps 32-36C (90-97F) but 27-30C (81-86F) in some inland parts.

Some cloud in the north and west but this will be thin allowing some decent sun throughout. Slightly cooler in the east. Max temps 31-36C (88-97F) but a little cooler along coasts.

Around the world

Yesterday's headlines reports

Algeria	28-32 S	London	23-19 S	Algeria	28-32 S	London	21-13 S
Amsterdam	20-26 S	Madrid	21-15 S	Amsterdam	20-26 S	Madrid	21-15 S
Antwerp	21-27 S	Moscow	22-18 S	Antwerp	21-27 S	Moscow	22-18 S
Athens	28-32 S	Nairobi	23-19 S	Athens	28-32 S	Nairobi	23-19 S
Berlin	21-27 S	Paris	22-18 S	Berlin	21-27 S	Paris	22-18 S
Bombay	28-32 S	Rome	23-19 S	Bombay	28-32 S	Rome	23-19 S
Buenos Aires	21-27 S	St Petersburg	22-18 S	Buenos Aires	21-27 S	St Petersburg	22-18 S
Calcutta	28-32 S	Tel Aviv	23-19 S	Calcutta	28-32 S	Tel Aviv	23-19 S
Cairo	28-32 S	Yokohama	22-18 S	Cairo	28-32 S	Yokohama	22-18 S
Cardiff	20-26 S	Zurich	21-15 S	Cardiff	20-26 S	Zurich	21-15 S
Chennai	28-32 S			Chennai	28-32 S		
Copenhagen	20-26 S			Copenhagen	20-26 S		
Cuba	28-32 S			Cuba	28-32 S		
Dublin	20-26 S			Dublin	20-26 S		
Edinburgh	20-26 S			Edinburgh	20-26 S		
Glasgow	20-26 S			Glasgow	20-26 S		
Harbin	28-32 S			Harbin	28-32 S		
Helsinki	20-26 S			Helsinki	20-26 S		
Jerusalem	28-32 S			Jerusalem	28-32 S		
Los Angeles	28-32 S			Los Angeles	28-32 S		
Lyons	21-27 S			Lyons	21-27 S		
Manila	28-32 S			Manila	28-32 S		
Medan	28-32 S			Medan	28-32 S		
Mumbai	28-32 S			Mumbai	28-32 S		
Osaka	28-32 S			Osaka	28-32 S		
Perth	28-32 S			Perth	28-32 S		
Port of Spain	28-32 S			Port of Spain	28-32 S		
Rangoon	28-32 S			Rangoon	28-32 S		
Rio de Janeiro	28-32 S			Rio de Janeiro	28-32 S		
Sao Paulo	28-32 S			Sao Paulo	28-32 S		
Seoul	28-32 S			Seoul	28-32 S		
Shanghai	28-32 S			Shanghai	28-32 S		
Singapore	28-32 S			Singapore	28-32 S		
Sydney	28-32 S			Sydney	28-32 S		
Taipei	28-32 S			Taipei	28-32 S		
Tokyo	28-32 S			Tokyo	28-32 S		
Ulaanbaatar	28-32 S			Ulaanbaatar	28-32 S		
Winnipeg	28-32 S			Winnipeg	28-32 S		
Zurich	21-15 S			Zurich	21-15 S		

Television and radio

BBC 1

7.00am Business Report, 8.00am BBC Breakfast News, 9.00am News, 9.45am News, 10.00am News, 10.30am News, 11.00am News, 11.30am News, 12.00pm News, 12.30pm News, 1.00pm News, 1.30pm News, 2.00pm News, 2.30pm News, 3.00pm News, 3.30pm News, 4.00pm News, 4.30pm News, 5.00pm News, 5.30pm News, 6.00pm News, 6.30pm News, 7.00pm News, 7.30pm News, 8.00pm News, 8.30pm News, 9.00pm News, 9.30pm News, 10.00pm News, 10.30pm News, 11.00pm News, 11.30pm News, 12.00am News, 12.30am News, 1.00am News, 1.30am News, 2.00am News, 2.30am News, 3.00am News, 3.30am News, 4.00am News, 4.30am News, 5.00am News, 5.30am News, 6.00am News, 6.30am News, 7.00am News, 7.30pm News, 8.00pm News, 8.30pm News, 9.00pm News, 9.30pm News, 10.00pm News, 10.30pm News, 11.00pm News, 11.30pm News, 12.00am News, 12.30am News, 1.00am News, 1.30am News, 2.00am News, 2.30am News, 3.00am News, 3.30am News, 4.00am News, 4.30am News, 5.00am News, 5.30am News, 6.00am News, 6.30am News, 7.00am News, 7.30pm News, 8.00pm News, 8.30pm 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Rory Carroll finds intimidated Catholics begging to leave estate where three brothers died

Whispers reopen sectarian wounds



WHEN the tall wind of Northern Ireland's marching season seared through Carnary estate last month it left behind a fire-bomb house, three dead brothers, a traumatised mother and a cliché of a community united in grief.

Bouquets had been placed outside the remains of 41 Carnary Park by the time the world's press descended on Ballymoney, Co Antrim. That the Quinn brothers — Richard, aged 10, Mark, nine, and Jason, eight — had died horrifically was clear from neighbours' anguish. Shame and disgust followed when police said loyalists had targeted the house because the boys' mother, Chrissie, aged 29, was Catholic. The estate, 90 per cent Protestant, went numb.

Counsellors arrived to treat grieving neighbours. A fund was set up for Mrs Quinn. Protestants packed the Catholic funeral service. The community, said media reports, was united in grief.

Since then 33 Catholic families have begged the Housing Executive to get them off the estate and away from intimidation. That means 20 per cent of the families in Northern Ireland presenting themselves as homeless come from among Carnary's 200 houses.

A whispering campaign has spread, claiming that the attack was not sectarian, that the Quinns in some way brought it on themselves. No one talks anymore of fund-

raising. The counsellors have departed for want of business. Sarah, a pensioner living opposite the Quinn house, pointed to a red house: "That's the only [Catholic] left. She's terrified but says she won't go. What do you think of that?"

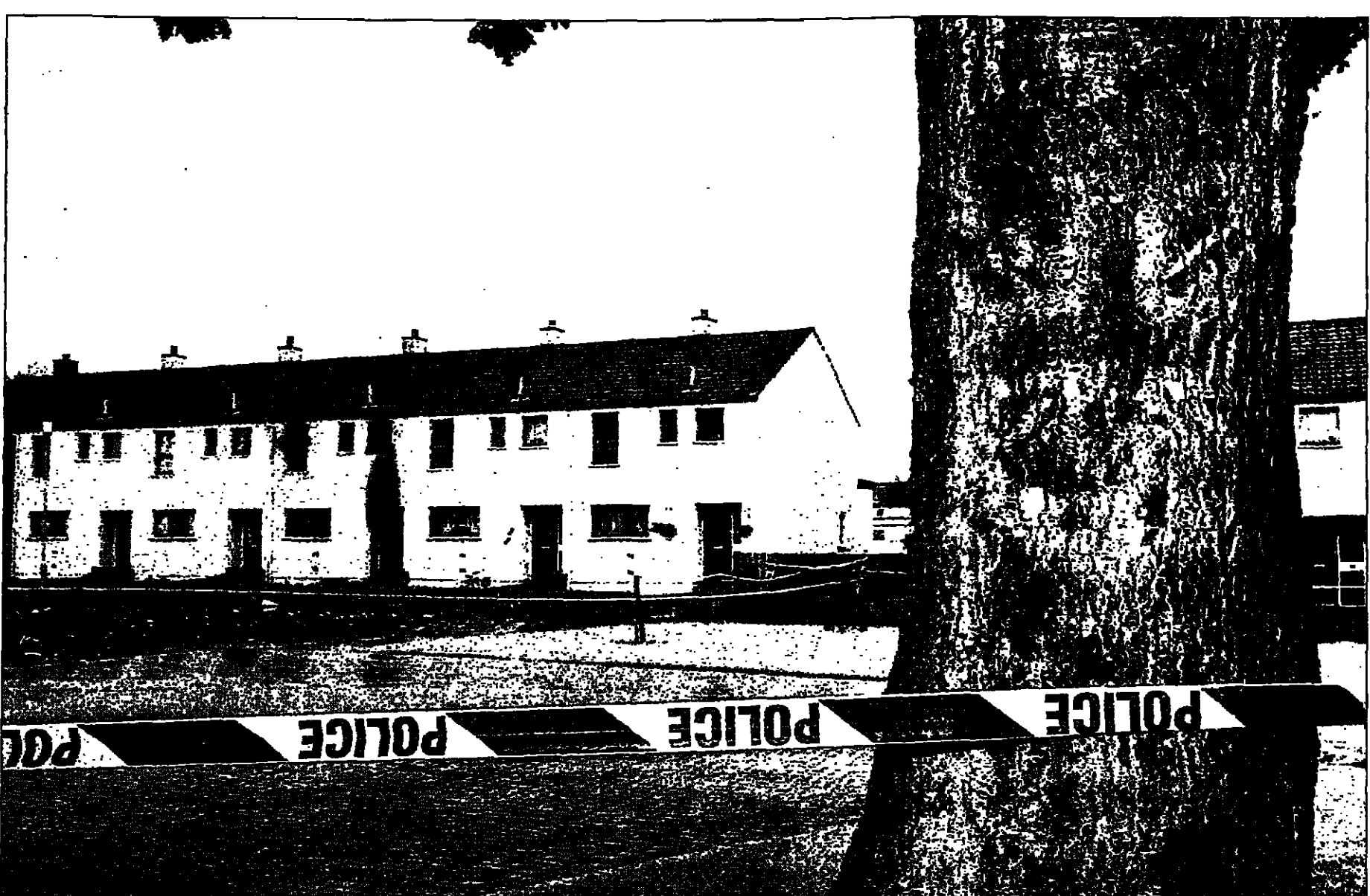
Sarah dismissed the RUC's claim that the Ulster Volunteer Force was to blame for the July 12 attack, allegedly in support of the Orange Order's stand-off at Drumcree, 70 miles away.

"There's talk of a memorial but I don't think that's right, we don't need one," she said. "The fire wasn't sectarian at all. Drumcree is hours away." She winked and suggested other motives.

Around the estate, responses were more cautious. After decades of obscurity and relative peace, residents were stung that Carnary, where boys are left in front doors, had become media shorthand for bigotry.

"Everything's back to normal now, so you can put away your notebook. There are no problems here," said one woman, offering a cigarette but not her name. She knew nothing about the intimidation of Catholics and was apparently unaware she lived beside one. "Really? I had no idea. I don't ask things like that."

Adrian Proctor, a community development officer, said residents were distraught over the attack but were fed up with media intrusion. "Don't expect them to talk



The Carnary estate, including the house where three of the Quinn brothers (above left) died in a firebomb attack that some residents claim was not sectarian. PHOTOGRAPH KELVIN BOYES

They just want to get back to their lives."

The Coleraine Chronicle has sensed the mood and accentuated the positive, noting that Irish dancing lessons are held each Saturday in the Orange Hall and that Ballymoney borough's motto is Goodwill to All.

At least five of the 33 families that have applied to leave had received bullets in the past. The Housing Executive has offered alternative accommodation to six families, is seeking accommodation for another three and has put the rest on an ordinary waiting list — proof, said some residents, that Catholics were exploiting the tragedy to jump the queue for better housing.

Five miles away in Rasharkin are the surviving Quinns. Though seven of them are squashed into Mrs Quinn's mother's bungalow, housing is not a priority. Getting through the day comes first.

"Some days Chrissie's not up to it. She seems OK, but then she breaks down," said her brother Francis, aged 28. "One thing that's keeping her going is the letters. There's hundreds, thousands; she reads all of them."

The ones from President Clinton and the pop star Chris de Burgh — CD included — are prized, but it is the sheer volume that is comforting. Mrs Quinn's mother, Irene, said the letters helped to allay bitterness. "There's nice, decent people in Ballymoney, decent Protestants, decent Orangemen. But there's some evil people too."

The Quinn family is mixed — Irene is Protestant, her father was an Orangeman. Chrissie was raising her sons as Protestant. But Francis is furious over Carnary's whispering campaign. "Anyone who says the attack was not sectarian is scum. The UVF did it. That's why Catholics are getting out."

Irene stepped in to caution him: "We're still afraid. We're only down the road, and we can still be got at. We have to be careful about what we say, we can't stir it up."

Lee, Mrs Quinn's surviving son, left the living room without having said a word. It was his 13th birthday on July 30, but there was no party. Just a card and clothes to replace those lost in the fire. "He misses his brothers," said Irene. "He cries in his sleep and goes up to the grave."

Two fringe terrorist groups edge towards accepting peace deal

Pressure mounts on the IRA to declare its battle is over

Rory Carroll

THE prospect of a permanent end to violence in Northern Ireland moved closer yesterday when it emerged that two fringe terrorist groups were nudging towards accepting the Good Friday agreement.

The move adds to the pressure on the IRA to declare its war over.

The Loyalist Volunteer Force, raised hopes of weapons soon being handed over after becoming the first

terror group to say its campaign was over for good.

The Irish National Liberation Army has in secret contacts with the Government reportedly said it would call a ceasefire in return for the release of prisoners and other concessions. That would further isolate the two splinter republican groups, Continuity and Real IRA.

The LVF statement was welcomed as a sign of progress from a group which opposes the accord despite calling a ceasefire three months ago. Ken Maginnis of the Ulster Unionist Party said he hoped they had the courage to see it through.

Mo Mowlam, the Northern Ireland Secretary, said she

would watch to see that the ceasefire lived up to its billing as complete and unequivocal. "They know what they have to do," she said.

Northern Ireland Office sources added that the LVF's volatility meant a handover of weapons was needed to make the statement credible and pave the way for the release of its prisoners.

Pastor Kenny McClinton, a former loyalist prisoner who liaises between the LVF and authorities, said prison conditions would have to improve first. "LVF prisoners are on 23-hour lock-up. There's no way weapons will be handed over while that goes on. These people are not defeated."

He said the Government's

suspicion that the group's ceasefire had been breached was nonsense. "It's like Snowball in (George Orwell's novel) Animal Farm. The LVF were reported to be behind everything, including killing Cock Robin."

LVF and INLA prisoners are pressuring their leaderships to cut a deal with the Government to include them in the scheme under which terrorists are freed within two years. The first batch of 400 from mainstream groups are expected out this month.

LVF prisoners who defected to cut a deal with the Government from such groups are believed to be frustrated as they watch former comrades fill in release application forms. Another motive is intense surveillance

on its dwindling membership, estimated at 50, which renders attacks difficult.

Yesterday's declaration — which defined its ceasefire's completeness as "entire, whole, brought to an end, perfect, absolute, utter, finished" — adds to pressure on the IRA to declare its war over.

Last week David Ervine of the Ulster Volunteer Force-linked Progressive Unionist Party challenged Sinn Féin and the IRA to make such a statement. Mr Ervine said it was necessary to soothe loyalists in the wake of breakthrough republican bombings.

Gerry Adams, Sinn Féin president, has resisted calls to declare the IRA ceasefire permanent since John Major,

then prime minister, challenged him to do so in 1994.

The UVF and Ulster Defence Association, suspected of breaching their own ceasefires during the marching season, are under pressure to make a similar statement.

Inla's overtures to the Government could culminate next month in an end to its 23-year campaign, whose victims included Airey Neave, the Tory MP. Like the LVF,

the group is deemed volatile and would need to persuade the Government that its ceasefire would not crack, nor that members would join Continuity or Real IRA.

The Observer yesterday reported that it would cost £3,500 in grants to resettle each prisoner, totalling almost £1.5 million. The news added a fresh twist to the controversy over the release of prisoners.

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Loyalist Volunteer Force terrorists announcing their ceasefire. PHOTOGRAPH CHRIS ANDERSON

Continuing campaign of sectarianism undermines loyalist group's claim it has renounced violence

THE credibility of the Loyalist Volunteer Force's claim that it has permanently given up violence is undermined by a two-year terror campaign of ruthless sectarianism and volatility, writes Rory Carroll.

Security sources say the danger of the group is not that it is bloodthirsty but brainless — ever since the INLA murdered its leader, Billy Wright, in the Maze prison last December.

However behind the decision to declare the war over are a number of factors: the desire to improve its prison-

ers' conditions with a view to their release, security forces' success in hampering attacks and the chance to put pressure on other terrorist groups to reciprocate, especially rival loyalists.

Wright formed the LVF in the summer of 1996 from Ulster Volunteer Force members frustrated with the lack of response to the IRA's renewed campaign after the Canary Wharf bomb.

Its Portadown base broadened as more UVF defectors joined in bombings and shootings, claiming up to 18 lives, including that of teenager

Statement from the ruling council of the Loyalist Volunteer Force

The Loyalist Volunteer Force notes with interest the thrust of the recent debate.

reference whether or not paramilitary groups are willing to declare that their ceasefires are in fact "unequivocal and complete" — i.e. that the war is effectively over, irrespective of whether or not republicans recognise the English dictionary — for LVF personnel the meaning of the word "complete" is quite clear. The word means: entire, whole, brought to an end, perfect, absolute, utter, finished.

Therefore Dr Mowlam take note: when the ruling army council of the Loyalist Volunteer Force states that our ceasefire is "unequivocal and complete", LVF officers and volunteers understand our clear intention and, in a disciplined manner, proceed to carry out the required duties.

With the above reiterated facts of reality in mind, the LVF calls upon the Secretary of State to fulfil her own stated responsibilities, informed by her own stated criteria of a "continuous" review, and reciprocate this LVF standard of good faith by a full and prompt inclusion of the LVF in the ongoing political process.

ELLE

See the September issue of ELLE on Friday — for your chance to win

ELLE THE MAGAZINE THAT'S GOT STYLE COVERED

US embassy bomb rescue

A faint cry, then Rose falls silent

Trapped in the rubble of an office block next to the US embassy in Nairobi, a woman struggled for days to stay alive. Help seemed very close at times, but the clock was against her, writes Lucy Hannan



The scene in Nairobi showing, on the left, the US embassy still standing. In Dar-es-Salaam (left) US troops put razor wire around the bombed embassy. MAIN PHOTOGRAPH: SPENCER LINDSEY

THE cranes stop, the drills and generators fall quiet and conversation ceases as an Israeli sniffer dog is led again into the tunnel of concrete and twisted metal. The silence holds for a minute. Then the dog barks five times. Rose is still alive.

She has been trapped under the folded layers of rubble since the massive bomb blast on Friday — and her faint pleas stopped early on Sunday morning. But this dog is trained to find the living.

"We know her face is badly burned and she cannot see, but we cannot give up," said Nathan Kahara, chairman of the Nairobi Red Cross.

The woman, known only as Rose, was one of 20 attending a secretarial course in the devastated five-storey building behind the US embassy. The bodies of six were dragged out soon after the blast. "Another of them managed to pass out a slip of paper with 12 names, but when we tried to move the boulders, they were crushed," said volunteer rescuer Elizabeth Njoroge.

A small group of relatives — who had circumvented the military cordon — are fixated on the place which is now described as having "a concentration of bodies".

When the cranes swing back into action, the weight of the monstrous pillars being painstakingly hoisted from the collapsed Ufundi Co-operative Building serves as an indication of the size of the bomb. Israeli blast specialists say it is among the biggest they have known.

The 200-strong Israeli team have pulled out about 25

bodies since arriving on Saturday afternoon. Newly-arrived French and US experts extended the search area yesterday, finding another body and a mass of shattered glass and debris in a nearby 20-storey building. On the 21st floor, teams with dogs found a woman with her young son; she was rushed to hospital unharmed but confused.

Crucial encouragement had been given to Rose by Gatili Nganga, who was pulled out late on Saturday. He had managed to find the living.

Gatili Nganga kept calling to diggers, and managed to pass some water to Rose, one floor above him

aged to keep calling to the team of rescuers and even managed to pass some water through a hole to Rose, one floor above him. He is now in hospital with a split head and crushed legs.

Rose's rescue should have quickly followed. But immediate tremors and shifts in the precarious tunnel meant the Israeli team had to change to a top-down approach to reach her. Workers kept contact with Rose through the night but she last spoke to them at about 5am yesterday.

Twelve hours later rescuers had still not been able to get to her. "I fear she has left us," said a Red Cross volunteer.

Time is not the only issue: bitterness is increasing among Kenyans over what they see as a "discriminating" and "segregated" response by the US team which has concentrated on the embassy. "They should be helping us. So many of us were killed because they were targeted — but they have abandoned us," said Susan Okello, an onlooker.

The complaint is echoed in Nairobi hospital, where Mike Sheldon, the chief administrator, says he finds it "very puzzling" that three US doctors sent on the day of the blast "didn't do anything".

A US spokesman in Nairobi, Bill Barr, said there had been no deliberate strategy of separation but that inevitably there are "conflicting priorities" in the aftermath of the terrorist attack. "We have to move survivors, find the missing, get to the evidence, and bring in more assets. We are trying hard to reach a *modus vivendi* to satisfy everyone," he said.

Twenty-seven Kenyans and 11 Americans are known to be among at least 174 killed in the Nairobi explosion. Thousands were injured.

Local donations of desperately needed blankets, food and medical supplies have poured into the city's hospital — but none of the US medical supplies flown to Nairobi had yesterday reached doctors and nurses.

Thousands of people have patiently queued in hospitals and makeshift centres to donate blood. Angela Muriel, a caterer, said she had tried with her husband all day to



give blood: "We had to give up because everywhere we went there were so many waiting."

As FBI officers were arriving, the US spokesman, Mr Barr, said: "The massive explosive device is known to have been planted in a car, which drove into a car park just behind the embassy — that service road has a drop barrier and a guard and you need an ID card or a good explanation to get through."

Unusually situated in the centre of the city, the US embassy is the second biggest on the continent after the one in South Africa — was considered at "low risk".

David Hirst, page 8

Kenyans praise Israeli efforts as army team's speed and skill save lives

Lucy Hannan in Nairobi and Julian Borger in Jerusalem

AN ISRAELI army rescue team took the lead role over the weekend in the search for Friday's devastating bomb attack in Nairobi, winning praise from local residents.

More than 200 Israeli soldiers and medics, equipped with sniffer dogs and electronic tracking equipment, flew in on Saturday morning and immediately began organising a rescue effort which had been hampered by a lack of equipment, and bewildered by the sheer scale of the blast.

One of the team said it was one of the biggest explosion sites he had seen, suggesting the use of "over a tonne" of high explosive. "It's a real mess," he said.

The rescue team includes medics specialising in trauma, and a rescue unit from the Israeli army's home-front command. The team proved itself in Buenos Aires in 1992 when it pulled several survivors from the wreckage of the Israeli embassy after a similar attack.

Members of the Israeli team in Nairobi were privately critical of their US counterparts, whom they said had focused exclusively on efforts to rescue US embassy employees.

"We had a real fight with them just to let us put up our lights on the embassy wall. I've never seen such behaviour," one Israeli soldier said.

This determination was reflected on talk shows and in newspaper columns. Pat Buchanan, the prominent right-wing conservative, called on Mr Clinton to "eliminate" one exiled Saudi Arabian extremist who is under suspicion — Osama bin Laden — and adopt the approach President Reagan took when he bombed Libya in the mid-1980s after jumping to the conclusion that Colonel Muammar Gaddafi's regime was responsible

Hard search ahead for the suspects

Gary Younge in Washington

"THE MEMORY

of the United States is very long and our reach is very far," the secretary of state, Madeleine Albright, declared yesterday, echoing President Clinton's vow to hunt down those responsible for the US embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania on Friday.

Americans will certainly remember these bombings for a long time, and the reach of the international manhunt already under way will be extensive. Sooner or later, it is possible that the perpetrators will be identified.

Much less sure is whether the US will ever succeed in bringing to book whoever these suspects are.

On his weekly radio address at the weekend, Mr

Hunt will go from 'hands and knees in rubble' to 'most sophisticated forensic analysis'

Clinton reiterated the pledge he made on the day of the bombings, in which more than 5,000 were injured — most of them not Americans but Africans — in Nairobi and Dar-es-Salaam: "No matter how long it takes, or where it takes us, we will pursue terrorists until the cases are solved and justice done."

This determination was reflected on talk shows and in newspaper columns. Pat Buchanan, the prominent right-wing conservative, called on Mr Clinton to "eliminate" one exiled Saudi Arabian extremist who is under suspicion — Osama bin Laden — and adopt the approach President Reagan took when he bombed Libya in the mid-1980s after jumping to the conclusion that Colonel Muammar Gaddafi's regime was responsible



Osama bin Laden: suspect targeted by US rightwing

for an explosion in a club in Germany where Americans died.

"The most powerful tool in our counter-terrorism arsenal is our determination to never give up," said Mr Clinton. Tenacious investigations of terrorist actions inside the United States have brought suspects to justice. But retrieving suspects in attacks staged overseas has proved far more difficult.

In the past five years, eight terrorists have been either extradited to the United States or captured and brought back for trial — in connection with attacks staged in the US.

Mr Clinton has concentrated on these successes. "In recent years we have captured major terrorists in the far corners of the world and brought them to America to answer for their crimes," he said.

In 1997, Mir Aimal Kansi was sentenced to death for killing two CIA employees outside their headquarters in Virginia. The American authorities had found him in Pakistan and brought him back for trial. They also brought Ramzi Ahmed Yousef and others to trial in New York for their part in the 1993 World Trade Centre bombing in New York.

In June this year, 16 years after a Pan-Am jet was bombed on its way from

Japan to Hawaii, American investigators found the man they think was responsible.

Nobody has ever been prosecuted, however, for the most fatal assault on an American installation abroad — the truck-bomb that killed 241 Americans at a Marine barracks in Beirut in 1983.

In 1996, suspects were tried in a Lebanese court for the 1976 assassination in Beirut of the US ambassador, Francis Meloy. But they were acquitted.

In the time since 19 US airmen were killed in 1996 by a lorry bomb outside their barracks near Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, there have been a handful of arrests; but none of those detained remains in custody.

"The investigation is limited by the co-operation of the host country," the former deputy director of the FBI, Weldon Kennedy, told the Washington Post. "Saudi Arabia didn't provide much co-operation and that's been a real problem."

The aftermath of the 1988 Lockerbie bombing typifies the problems. Long-term work by British and American investigators led the two countries to accuse two Libyan intelligence agents of being behind the explosion on a Pan-Am jumbo jet over Scotland, in which 270 people died. But Libya has so far refused to give up the suspects for trial.

In the search for the latest bombers, the CIA and the FBI are most likely to spearhead the search, though the US state department said yesterday that "several different departments" would be involved.

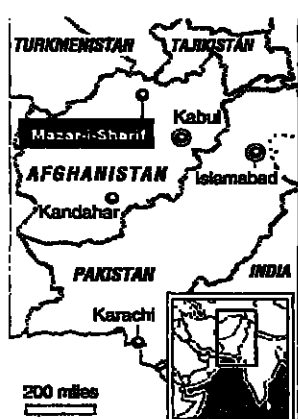
The investigations are expected to extend far beyond the African continent. The FBI is already sifting through its database of 200,000 suspect individuals and more than 3,000 organised groups.

One official said the search on the ground would start with "101-tech, hands and knees, crawling through rubble", and eventually progress to "the most sophisticated forensic analysis we can bring to bear".

Last city captured, claim Taliban

Richard Galpin in Kabul

AFGHANISTAN'S Taliban Islamic movement yesterday claimed to have captured Mazar-i-Sharif, the headquarters of the opposition



200 miles

sition alliance and the only city to have remained outside the control of the Islamic militia.

But a spokesman for the opposition alliance said their forces had regained control of most of the city. He said fighting broke out when Taliban troops started searching houses and trying to collect weapons. The fighting escalated, he said, leading to Taliban forces being driven out of the city. The report could not be confirmed.

After a heavy air and artillery bombardment, Taliban troops broke through opposition lines around the city in an assault early on Saturday.

Independent sources said the Taliban penetrated the defences as two groups belonging to the disparate opposition alliance were fighting among themselves.

Hours after launching the attack Taliban fighters were

seen driving through the city centre in pick-up trucks and negotiating with commanders who remained inside the city.

It had been expected that thousands of opposition troops would mount a fierce defence of the strategic city but many fled without putting up much resistance. Large numbers of troops and civilians were reported to be heading south towards the central province of Bamian.

Even so, the Taliban claimed to have killed hundreds of opposition fighters and captured many more.

"The city has fallen and is completely under our control," a Taliban spokesman said from the movement's headquarters in the southern city of Kandahar.

A Taliban supreme leader, Mulla Mohammed Omar, called on the Afghan people to offer thanksgiving prayers and recite the Koran

for three days in gratitude for the victory.

Independent sources confirmed yesterday that many strategic positions in Mazar-i-Sharif were held by the Taliban, including administrative buildings and the radio station. But it was unclear who controlled the civilian airport to the east of the city.

Asad Ullah, a spokesman for opposition warlord Abdul Rashid Dostam, acknowledged the loss of the city, saying: "Our forces have been scattered everywhere. There is not much we can do at the moment in the north."

But there was sporadic fighting yesterday morning on deserted streets.

The Iranian government, which backs the opposition parties, accused the Taliban of seizing 11 diplomats and a correspondent of the official Iranian news agency, Irna, who is based in the city.

Cypriot bishop linked to fraud cases

Chris Drake in Limassol reports on the scandal putting church business dealings under scrutiny

ONE of the most powerful religious leaders in Cyprus, the Bishop of Limassol, is at the centre of several alleged international multi-million dollar fraud cases.

Two Scotland Yard detectives flew to Cyprus on July 20 after four suspects arrested in Britain in connection with a \$3.7 million (£2.2 million) case named the bishop as their accomplice. The detectives are now expected to stay another week at least.

While not permitted to question Bishop Chrysostomos himself, the British officers are being allowed to sit in on interrogations conducted by the Cypriot police.

New allegations against the bishop surface almost daily, involving claims of fraudulent investment schemes in various parts of the world.

Most are reported to be connected with high-risk schemes that promise large profits. Complainants claim they have lost their money.

The latest case to emerge is in the United States, where a South American charity for 2,000 poverty-stricken girls claims it has lost \$1.7 million in a get-rich-quick investment scheme. The Perez Pallares Fundación in Quito, Ecuador, has filed a suit in Washington against a representative of the bishop.

Police have searched the bishop's residence and the Limassol bishopric, and the scandal has been the subject of lengthy top-level government meetings. The head of the Cyprus Orthodox Church, Archbishop Chrysostomos, who originally described the allegations as unfounded, is heading a church committee carrying out its own investigation. This move followed a marathon meeting last week of the church's governing synod, which questioned the bishop and then found him guilty of having "entered into agreements of a financial nature without the approval of the Holy Synod and the church's Financial Council".

The bishop admitted he had

not told the archbishop about certain business transactions, adding that he was "happy" to be questioned because the church system works well, in a democratic manner and according to the rules of the church that we love and respect.

A spokesman for Scotland Yard said yesterday that the four people who named the

Complainants say money vanished in 'get-rich-quick' schemes

bishop as their accomplice were arrested last month. "They are now out on bail pending further inquiries," he added. Cypriot newspapers have reported that two are British and two American, but the police spokesman was unable to confirm this or provide other details.

Among those investigating the case is a Cypriot unit for combating money-laundering. The bishop has confirmed that the \$3.7 million was moved from the offshore branch of Yugoslav-based Ka-

ric Banka to another bank in Australia.

The bishop — a white-bearded man in his 60s who wields enormous influence in the business life of the holiday and shipping centre of Limassol — has denied any involvement in the alleged fraud and said the money was "clean" and moved legally between the banks.

The church in Cyprus is immensely wealthy. It owns vast tracts of land and properties including hotels. It is involved in business deals that run into billions of pounds.

Cyprus has been criticised repeatedly during the 1990s for acting as a financial entrepot for Yugoslavia's Serbs, who are under international sanctions.

The government and parliament have made some moves to rein in such dealings. But under the constitution, the church enjoys a special status with full autonomy over the handling of its property and business affairs.

Some members of parliament are now pressing for regulations to make the church subject to government controls. One political party suggests the church should concentrate on its religious and social work.

News in brief

War crimes suspect killed

A lawyer for a Serb war crimes suspect who was shot dead in a bar brawl claimed that the Serbian state security service orchestrated the killing.

Tatomir Lekovic said his client, Slobodan Miljkovic, had been shot to prevent him testifying at the war crimes tribunal in The Hague, where he is accused of killing Muslims and Croats. — AP.

Foreigners held

Burma's military regime detained 18 foreigners yesterday for distributing pamphlets the government said were aimed

at inciting unrest. The detentions came a day after the 10th anniversary of a nationwide uprising against the military government without unrest, the government said. — AP.

Kashmir gunfight

A separatist leader was killed yesterday in a gunfight with Indian police in Kashmir's main city, Srinagar, police said. The All Party Hurriyat (Freedom) Conference group of separatist parties claimed Ali Mohammed Dar had been killed in police custody. — AP.

Cyprus heatwave

About 140 people were admitted to hospitals in Nicosia yesterday from exhaustion caused by a heatwave. At

least 15 people have died in Cyprus since the heatwave began last week. Temperatures have hit 43C. — AP.

Zhivkov buried

Thousands of mostly elderly mourners marched through the Bulgarian capital, Sofia, yesterday in a final tribute to Todor Zhivkov. Zhivkov, who died on Wednesday, was eastern Europe's last surviving Stalinist former leader. — AP.

Pile-up in Turkey

A minibus crashed into a truck near the southern Turkish city of Nigde yesterday, setting off a motorway pile-up that killed at least 18 people and injured 23, the provincial governor said. — AP.

Floods diverted

Levees were dynamited along a stretch of the Yangtze River yesterday to divert floodwaters which threatened cities and farms in central China's Hubei province, the Xinhua News Agency reported. Police evacuated 50,000 residents before the flooding. — AP.

Sudan meeting

John Garang, the leader of Sudan's largest rebel group, the SPLA, arrived in Cairo yesterday for a meeting of Sudanese opposition. Egypt requested the meeting because it feared the civil war could affect control of the Nile, its main source of water. — AP.

Opposition over Kohl



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SPD asks if Germans will accept a chancellor in a wheelchair

Opposition stirs row over Kohl's successor

Denis Staunton in Berlin

CHANCELLOR Helmut Kohl returns from his summer holiday today to a heated debate about whether Germans are willing to accept a chancellor in a wheelchair. Mr Kohl insisted yesterday that his chosen successor remains Wolfgang Schäuble, who has used a wheelchair since an assassination attempt in 1990.

"I stressed a few days ago that he is a boon for the Christian Democrats [CDU]



Wolfgang Schäuble: thinks he is fit for the top job

and that I want him to succeed me," the chancellor said. Doubts about Mr Schäuble's future emerged last week when his wife, Ingeborg, told the weekly news magazine Stern that she did not want her husband to be chancellor.

"Besides, I don't believe it would be easy to convey to the public the image of a chancellor in a wheelchair. I have very great doubts about that," she said.

Commentators assumed that Mrs Schäuble was speaking on behalf of her husband, and the opposition Social Democrats (SPD) immediately began a succession debate within the CDU. Describing Mr Schäuble as "very conservative", the SPD candidate for chancellor, Gerhard Schröder, said he would prefer to share power in a grand coalition with the defence minister, Volker Rühe.

"He would — insofar as that's possible for a conservative — perhaps be more open at the start to the other side," he said.

Mr Rühe makes no secret of his ambition to become chancellor and has long been regarded as Mr Schäuble's most formidable rival for the post. But he said yesterday he backed Mr Kohl's chosen successor, although his remarks in the mass circulation Bild

am Sonntag were accompanied by photographs of him in dynamic poses on a beach.

"Schäuble is clearly the number two behind Helmut Kohl. I think that's good because we have a long-standing friendship. There will be no personal disagreements between me and Schäuble. Quite the reverse: we will work so closely together in the future that it will make many people wonder," he said.

Mr Schäuble, who is respected as one of the sharpest intellects in German politics, returned to active politics a few months after the assassination attempt to become the CDU parliamentary leader. He enjoys good relations with opposition politicians and, unlike Mr Kohl, has not ruled out working with the SPD in a grand coalition.

Privately, some senior Christian Democrats have expressed doubts about whether Mr Schäuble's disability would inhibit him from becoming chancellor. Bavaria's conservative prime minister, Edmund Stoiber, was accused of tastelessness when he questioned whether the public would accept a chancellor in a wheelchair.

Mr Schäuble, who once told his wife that she should have allowed him to die following

the shooting, is unruffled by questions about his disability. In an interview in the weekly news magazine Der Spiegel, out today, he insists that such questions are legitimate and necessary.

"Anyone in a wheelchair who seeks political responsibility at a high level must be prepared not to regard this question as unseemly or distasteful. In America, the state of each president's health is discussed. I don't see anything remarkable in this," he said.

Mr Schäuble claims the SPD are stoking up a debate about a possible grand coalition to deflect attention from their more likely coalition partners, the Greens. Support for the environmentalist party has plummeted following pledges to triple the price of petrol, impose a speed limit on the autobahn and close all nuclear power stations within four years.

Mr Schäuble does not expect to walk again but insists that his life remains fulfilling. "I am coping with my disability, I can do my work well and I have accepted this life," he said.

He is keen to point out that, as long as Mr Kohl remains in office, the top job is not available. But he has no doubt that he is fit to be chancellor. "I know I can do it in a wheelchair," he said.

City hall equals city hell for Russia's most assassination-prone mayor

In the Dagestan capital of Makhachkala, James Meek meets an official suffering from a serious case of post-Soviet stress

SAYEED Amirov, the mayor of Russia's most volatile city, has a problem that distracts him from his work. People keep trying to kill him. With the tally at eight attempted hits in six years, one of the world's most nearly-murdered civil officials wants to see whether a mayor is allotted more lives than a cat.

Mr Amirov tries not to let it get to him, though he carries the wounds. When he rises to greet guests in his office in the capital of the region of Dagestan in southern Russia, he gets to his feet in a second of intense effort, then sits down: a clip of automatic rifle bullets damaged his spine in 1995 and he can't walk for long unaided.

"I will walk again, definitely," he said. "I already do. I don't get far, but it's a start." Around the mayor's office and on the street to his home, the manhole covers have been asphalted over to stop assassins planting bombs inside.

"They began in 1992 with automatic weapons," said Mr Amirov, with the morbid gleam of the indestructible. Then they moved from guns to bombs. Now they've moved from bombs to grenade launchers.

The most recent attempt was last month. The weapons were not exactly grenade launchers: they were M16 hand-held bazookas designed to stop Nato tanks. The attackers parked on the far side of the square facing city hall in Makhachkala and fired five rounds into the building. One went straight into Mr Amirov's office.

"It's written that you go, you go, wherever you're sitting," is Mr Amirov's fatalistic view. It was a typical morning at city hall last week in this Asian port city of 300,000. A procession of bodyguards entered the little anteroom housing the mayor's secretary.



Sayeed Amirov: running a city armed to the teeth

The first entered silently and preened in front of a full-length mirror, making minute adjustments to his holster and walkie-talkie, before leaving without a word.

The second marched in and announced that a crowd of angry minibus drivers was marching towards the square. Minibuses are the main

"If you're weak, they call you a limp rag. If you're strong, they call you executioner"

means of public transport and the drivers are the protagonists in a bitter dispute with the mayor. "We're arming," said the bodyguard, and led a third came in breathlessly with a Kalashnikov and told the unimpressed secretary: "I'll protect you."

While talking with the Guardian, Mr Amirov repeatedly broke off to make calls organising the defence of the building, or to flick the channels of a television showing basketball, the news, and a closed-circuit view of the square.



The demonstration passed off peacefully. But Mr Amirov's nervousness was understandable. In May, two local worthies, the Khachilayev brothers — one of them a member of the Russian parliament — stormed the regional government building opposite city hall with a group of heavily armed supporters, taking it in five minutes after a shootout in which two policemen were killed.

The Khachilayevs have never been punished, so feeble is the rule of law in Makhachkala.

When Mr Amirov was elected mayor in February he already had a fat portfolio of enemies acquired in his time as deputy leader in the regional government of Dagestan. That didn't stop him making new ones.

No one objected when he began repairing the city's crumbling roads. There were no objections when he began clearing the city's streets of unauthorised traders.

When he tried to move the main fruit and vegetable market from its central position opposite the huge new Yusuf Bey mosque, there was an outcry. The Khachilayevs

The letter-bomb spate has drawn parallels with a similar campaign in 1995, when rightwing extremists linked to the secret services began what came to be known as the "strategy of tension".

This time police suspect that anarchist and squatter groups are behind the bombs, to avenge the suicide of two of their members, who were arrested for allegedly trying to sabotage a new high-speed rail link in north-west Italy.

The first parcel bomb was sent to Maurizio Landi, the Turin prosecutor responsible for their arrest. A second was sent to a journalist who criticised the squatters.

The Rome prosecutor, Antonio Marini, has said he believes the bombs are the work of an extremist faction of an anarchist movement.

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An ethnic Albanian refugee feeds her baby in the village of Cirez, south-west of Pristina, yesterday. PHOTOGRAPH: MARCO DI LAURO

Contact group plans limited autonomy to end war in Kosovo

Richard Norton-Taylor

THE six-country contact group on Kosovo — which includes the United States and Russia — has drawn up new proposals for the political future of war-torn Serbian province.

The proposals emerged yesterday as it became increasingly clear that Nato is unlikely to use military force to end the worsening humanitarian crisis.

Plans for a constitutional settlement "would give the people of Kosovo control of their own internal affairs, control over their own security and real autonomy", said Robin Cook, the British Foreign Secretary. He said there

were indications that Belgrade, seat of the Serbian government, was willing to discuss the plans.

"We are making it plain to both sides that this is not a war that either side can win," he said.

As they gained control of more territory from the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), Serbian forces were reported to be engaged in a scorched-earth policy, with the hill village of Likovac and surrounding hamlets in flames.

The Kosovo Information Centre (KIC), linked to the leading pro-independence ethnic Albanian party, said Serbian units backed by tanks shelled villages surrounding Decani in the west.

Serb forces had also at-

tacked the KLA stronghold town of Junik, it said.

The Serbian offensive has forced tens of thousands of people from their homes. The United Nations estimate that there are now 200,000 displaced people, but charities say the figure is higher.

Nato has completed preparations for military intervention, but this seems increasingly likely to remain a paper exercise. After a weekend telephone call between Jacques Chirac and Bill Clinton, a spokesman for the French president said the two leaders agreed they would need Russian approval before launching any Nato action.

The Russian deputy foreign minister, Nikolai Afanasyevsky, made it clear Mos-

cow opposes such plans. "No one can win a war in Kosovo and no one has yet explained what any foreign military interference would bring to that region and people there," he said in Belgrade after four days of shuttle diplomacy.

The British ambassador to Belgrade, Brian Donnelly, handed the proposals of the contact group made up of the US, Russia, Britain, France, Germany and Italy — to the two sides in the conflict over the weekend.

The Yugoslav president, Slobodan Milosevic, has said he is ready to talk with the Kosovans on autonomy but the feuding Albanian politicians have been unable to agree the make-up of their negotiating team.

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LA police are voted a force in fashion

Christopher Reed in Los Angeles

THE Los Angeles police department has been voted the best-dressed in the United States, and its chief has been named one of the country's 50 best-looking people.

The officers wear navy blue shirts with silver buttons, a metal oval badge and a black tie. Their peaked caps are military-style, featuring an other large badge. LAPD commander David Kalish described the uniform as

"simple yet sophisticated". The outfit has impressed the National Association of Uniform Manufacturers and Distributors, whose award will be formally announced in the August 17 issue of Law and Order magazine.

LA's police chief, Bernard Parks, has reported this "achievement" as one of the force's many accomplishments during his first year of office. Mr Parks, a black man of lean physique, moustache and sharp suits, modestly omitted his inclusion in People magazine's 50 most beautiful list.

Police said the devices — which contained a small amount of explosive hidden in a package of books — were capable of causing serious injury or even death.

Italy on alert for new letter-bomb campaign

Philip Wilkin in Rome

POLICE in Rome were called out to investigate four suspect packages at the weekend and there were similar alarms in Como and Bologna as fears grew that a spate of letter bombs marked the beginning of a terrorist campaign.

One of the packages, a suitcase left outside an office which has been used by the prime minister, Romano Prodi, was defused and found to contain only a brick, some wire and a box of matches.

But the false bomb came after five parcel bombs were sent to a magistrate, a journalist and three left-wing politicians during the first week of August.

Police said the devices — which contained a small amount of explosive hidden in a package of books — were capable of causing serious injury or even death.

The letter-bomb spate has drawn parallels with a similar campaign in 1995, when rightwing extremists linked to the secret services began what came to be known as the "strategy of tension".

This time police suspect that anarchist and squatter groups are behind the bombs, to avenge the suicide of two of their members, who were arrested for allegedly trying to sabotage a new high-speed rail link in north-west Italy.

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Broad church

Vote for Labour diversity

IN LABOUR households across the land a thud on the doormat has lately been heard. Who knows, if you're a party member, you may have caught the telltale sound in your own hall this very morning. It is an envelope from party headquarters in London, inviting members to exercise their democratic vote and elect six people to sit on Labour's National Executive Committee. Most of the 20-plus people who sit on the NEC are chosen from elsewhere, representing the various sections that make up what used to be called the Labour movement: the trade unions, local government and MPs. Members in the constituencies are allocated six seats. In the old days choosing this bit of the NEC was always a bit of a beauty contest, in which the activists would pick their favourite parliamentary representatives. The so-called "soft left" always did well, with Robin Cook and David Blunkett perennially popular. The harder left had their say too, with the ritual elections from

among the awkward squad: first Tony Benn, then Dennis Skinner and, more recently, Diane Abbott and Ken Livingstone. On the NEC they didn't have much effect, routinely being voted down by wide margins, but they at least had a seat at the top table — a constant, thorny reminder that the Labour Party remained, in Harold Wilson's enduring phrase, a "broad church."

This year's contest is different. Under changes approved last year, activists are no longer allowed to choose MPs for the constituency section. Instead they must pick from among their fellow activists. At the time, this sounded like the height of grassroots, egalitarian democracy. What could be better than real live envelope stuffers and poll count-takers sitting on Labour's governing body, there to represent rank-and-file members like themselves? Of course, the move was approved with a thundering majority.

But there's a catch. By taking high-profile dissenters of the Benn/Skinner variety out of the running, party bosses have not only ensured that they never again have to share the NEC with sceptics of national standing, they have also made it very difficult for left-leaning members to pick representatives of like mind. On their ballot forms, they face a long list of unknowns, with no obvious focus for a protest vote. Stripped of the benefit of name recognition, this year's candidates are

competing more on the basis of efficient organisation than ideological difference. That has handed an automatic advantage to those favoured by the leadership, especially if backed by the party machine. One group has tried to stand against this march toward centralisation, hoping to preserve a corner of the NEC for those who do not confuse conformity with loyalty. They call themselves the Centre-Left Grassroots Alliance, and have presented a slate of six candidates for the NEC: Andy Howell, Mark Seddon, Pete Willsman, Cathy Jamieson, Christine Shawcroft and Liz Davies. Millbank has, predictably, rubbished them as a bunch of Old Labour lefties — a task made easier by the presence of Ms Davies, famously barred from standing in Leeds North East by the NEC. But such a view is far too simplistic. Mr Howell, whose father Denis was a minister in the Callaghan government, would once have been considered on the traditional, Hattersleyite right of the party. He leads a defiantly mainstream group, Labour Reform. Equally, Mr Seddon, the editor of the Tribune newspaper, is a forward thinker and no reactionary.

What all six have in common is a determination to keep Labour as a party of ideas, open to dissent and discussion. This newspaper would have differences with all six of them — but we would like to see such

differences aired around Labour's governing table. The NEC should not have Soviet unanimity. It needs individuals who are proudly off-message. Those who have a vote in this small but significant election should bear that in mind — and take a stand against uniformity.

Pru won't do

Pension misselling continues

THE PRUDENTIAL is a highly successful, hugely profitable company. Managing £100-plus billion of their assets many thousands of people have no choice but to rely on it to provide for their future. Yet it is a company which has lately been doing its damndest to prove that trust misplaced. To be exposed as a past misseller of pensions is one thing. (That, of course, is a euphemism: the Prudential cheated people.) Even though it has taken the firm inordinate time to meet deadlines for identifying and compensating its victims, its chief executive Sir Peter Davis did last year eat a tiny crust from humble pie. He didn't quite weep and promise a new start but the insurer did falsomely assure us bad behaviour was all in the past. But here we are today with evidence that the Pru's corporate culture

has not changed. The first thought of its salespeople on seeing a customer appears to be how much commission they can screw out of ignorance.

Our inquiry shows two things. One is about failure of communication in a big company. If Sir Peter was sincere, he has proved ineffective in conveying his sentiments to all his rank and file staff. This is a company, evidently, still working with Thatcherite nostrums: no kinder, gentler, Blairite community spirit here. Prudential shareholders may be pleased with profits but they need to be told that a company taking responsibility across time for people's livelihoods in the special way pensions providers do has to maintain the very highest standards. If sales staff fleece customers now, what guarantees their future? If Sir Peter and his shareholders cannot or won't do the right thing then the regulators have to crack the whip. The Pru, for complicated reasons, has been allowed to exploit the division between the Financial Services and the Personal Investment Authorities. That split is coming to an end. It must now be counted as among the premier tasks of Howard Davies as chief financial regulator under the political supervision of Patricia Hewitt at the Treasury to fix the Prudential in their sights and make this company once again a pillar of rectitude.

Letters to the Editor

From amnesia to Melanesia

SO Dr Jonathan Miller never goes to the opera, not even to his own productions (Director savages 'dinosaurs' of the opera, August 6)? How odd — in March, I congratulated a man sitting two seats from me at the Shabesbury Theatre on the quality of his Col Fan Tuttle I had so much enjoyed; so did many others. What's more, I later saw the same man lead the cast into a nearby hotel bar for what looked like a post-show party. Is Dr Miller aware he has a suppleganger? And is this an explanation for his famous ubiquity? Tom Grieve, London.

I WAS amused by Catherine Bennett's piece about Menes (Dead puzzles society, August 8). Once, when I was a member, I wrote to their Journal and asked why they advertised for members in the Sun. The Sun later had a headline "Eggshead resigns", in protest at my letter, and the members wrote indignant letters to the journal claiming that the Sun was fun. For good ideas, try World's Best Ideas (Institute of Social Inventions). Not, I fear, a Mensa publication. Geoffrey Watson, Winchester.

AT the last Lambeth conference, some European bishops wanted to discuss polygamy, but were told by African bishops not to dabble in a nature they knew nothing about (Unholy and unreal, August 5). Canon Neville Boudry, Bristol.

KEN Campbell had better watch his back if he ever travels to Melanesia (Vol nambewani, July 22). My wank is particularly partial to arrogant white fellows with hairy eyebrows, and they would certainly be inviting as many clans as possible to share in their dinner plans! Susi Newborn, Grey Lynn, Auckland.

We do not publish letters where only an e-mail address is supplied; please include a full postal address. We may edit letters: shorter ones are more likely to appear. We regret we cannot acknowledge those not used.

The truth about Arthur

RE the finding of King Arthur (Do these markings mean that the legend of King Arthur is now a fact? August 7) — ancient legends are frequently grafted on to later actual historical personages. And such is the case with the legend of King Arthur.

This story of a "founding" group of 13, one of whom is a villain who betrays the glorious leader, is found worldwide. In origin the, nowadays very garbled, story derives from the ancient Celtic religion in which every year the moon sacrifices the sun and then graciously resurrects him. Thus King Arthur's "round table" is in fact a 13-zodiac.

In versions of the story, Arthur is in a castle in the south — where the sun goes in the winter — being treated for his wounds which "break out every year afresh". In others, he sleeps in a hillside and will one day re-awaken to lead his people again.

The story of Christ and equally of Sleeping Beauty are but two further examples of this same rebashed material. King Arthur, Christ and Sleeping Beauty are in origin one and the same person. As is Robin Hood. Robin's "arrows" are the shafts of sunlight as seen in a forest. And how does Robin die? By being bled to death by an evil priestess. Stan Gooch, Forestfach, Swansea.

THIS is not, as you state (Leader, August 7) the first scrap of solid evidence discovered linking the legendary Arthur with a real man. There are dozens of stories around south Wales, not to mention the Llandaf Charters, that not only mention the historical Arthur but give accounts of his family and his achievements.

If the same sort of attention was given to these stories as to the discovery made in Cornwall, they too could be presented as evidence to rot in sheds where they are rarely seen. Mark Bennett, Penarth, Vale of Glamorgan.

YOU erroneously call Arthur Regis rather than Rex (Bognor, you see, is of the king rather than being the king itself).

You repeat the assertion that the "historical" King Arthur was a Dark Ages warlord, the Dux Bellorum who kept the invaders of post-Roman Britain in check. Sadly, much though many of us might wish this to be true, there's no firm evidence to suggest that it is.

The best we can say is that there is an Arthur-shaped hole in this period of our past. Whether or not it was Arthur who filled it is something we are unlikely ever to know. The one thing we can be

sure of, is that this historical Arthur, if he was one at all, was an Ancient Briton, Breton, Scot or Welshman, an enemy of the Angles.

He would probably not be too happy to find that *cymru*, the word he would have used meaning fellow countryman has been widely replaced by the Angle word *welsh*, meaning foreigner. And that he now belongs to English Heritage and has been given the English title, king. Ian Potter, Sheffield.

IF the inscription was found by the Merlin's Cave Tavern, does that mean that Arthur asked to have it put on the slate? Paul Chant, Exeter.

CAN anyone have a slate at the "tavern" traditionally known as Merlin's Cave? Sounds like a bit of a hole to me. Vaughan Evans, Parbold, Lancashire.

THE other inscription faintly scratched into the stone is in post-Roman sixth century script. It reads "turn to page 2, column 8". Surely this is the earliest use of this scribal convention? David Harvey, Exeter.



Labour's salute to sycophants

HELEN Wilkinson has accused the cronies around the New Labour leadership of parasitism, insecurity and being "control freaks" (Faced with Labour's lads, August 6). It is these defining characteristics of the leadership which are producing rule changes destructive of democracy in the Labour Party.

Newly introduced regulations will permit the New Labour elite to pick the 40 or so candidates who have a real chance of election to the European Parliament next year. Spurious legitimacy will be given to the exercise by the 40 being chosen from about 250 selected by party members. Unless it is defeated, another system will be introduced which permits constituency parties only to select Westminster candidates from a list of Blair sycophants. In theory people not on the list may be selected locally, but the leader-

ship faction on the NEC will then be able to refuse to endorse them. Terry Johnson, Accrington, Lancashire.

PLEASEING to read Derek Draper's acceptance that his innocence is indeed questionable in all aspects of the cronysage saga but those regarding football (Letters, August 7), Draper's smug satisfaction has led him to dance about in yet another elephant trap. Chris Fox, Reading.

DOES Bill Purdie (Letters, August 8) honestly believe that Tony Blair and his cronies would allow the selection of women like Ellen Wilkinson and Barbara Castle to New Labour's list of suitable candidates? Somehow I think not. Noel Hammon, London.

Why Jack Straw's reforms will remain under probation

SO THE probation services of England and Wales are to be revamped to give them a "tough new image" as Jack Straw moves them away from the "advising, assisting and befriending" relics of 70s? The selection of new names suggested by the Home Office portray public protection as more in tune with what a contemporary public want from rigorously enforced punishments.

But public protection is not new for probation officers. As long ago as 1935 they faced a shadowed Decca Aitkenhead's argument (Giving probation a new name is fine, August 7) for reform and protection when they said "it should never be forgotten that the interests of the offender to be reformed, and the community to be protected by his reformation, are the only interests to be considered" (A Handbook of Probation ed. Mrs L Le Mesurier 1935). John R Howard, Durham.

never a mere symbol but a fundamental principle. It aimed to enable an offender to become a responsible member of society or at least to stop committing further offences. Clearly this was to protect the public. Manthos Pandell, Worcester.

Pals and foes

YOU claim (Smallweed, August 8) that the origin of the word "crony" is unknown, but surely the Pepsys quotation, which was split with a ch, suggests that it derives from the Greek *Chronos* or *Kronos* (Time).

It was therefore university slang for contemporary — "the men that were boys when I was a boy" — from which the present connotations are easily derived. R D Harrison, Oxford.

I HAVE long believed that the Animal Liberation Front was motivated by hatred of humans rather than love of animals: the release of minks from a farm in Hampshire merely confirms this. Are they unaware of the devastation this will cause to local wildlife? Or do they just not care? John Rogers, Bristol.

I too was on the aid convoy

I WAS also a member of the convoy (Volunteer to sue 'Angel of Mostar', August 6) of the aid mission to the northern borders of Albania. The troubles started when, with only 10 days' notice, the convoy had to be re-routed to Albania as the Serbs would not give visas for Pristina in Kosovo where the previous convoy had been in March.

The convoy was given a police escort all the way from Tirana. But unfortunately the organisers of the trip were unaware of the political and security situation in this very wild and cut-off area. The mafia are everywhere (and they include some of the local police). The members of the convoy were all warned of the

war situation but even so many appeared to think it would be a holiday trip. I believe that 90 per cent of aid convoys have difficulties but come back the wiser for it. The fact that many convoy members wish to go again proves that Mary Banks' intention to sue the organisers of Operation Angel is deplorable when so many thousands of refugees have had their lives shattered. Mary Banks suffered from violent asthma attacks and could not have volunteered for such work. She spent most of the 10 days we were in the town of Bajram Curri in her bedroom. I find her legal action unbelievable. Elizabeth Wallace, Norwich.

Cough drop

THE mention by your correspondent, Norma Davies (Letters, August 6) of All Fours brought back happy memories of making and selling this domestic cough remedy whilst a pharmaceutical apprentice in the late 1940s. The potent mix of morphine and alcohol suppressed any cough in most adults, let alone a child. The four ingredients were oils of peppermint and aniseed, laudanum (tincture of opium) and laudanum laudanum. The latter was known as Paregoric and was allegedly bought for coughs although many purchasers seemed to suffer year round. Noel Skow, Bury St Edmunds.

Consumers' need to know

SPECULATION that the proposed Freedom of Information Act has been postponed and may be weakened is very worrying (Government starve the public, August 7). If, as reported, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Jack Cunningham, regards Freedom of Information as a "chattering classes issue", its implementation that senior ministers have so little grasp of the importance of open government, is disturbing.

The issue arises most frequently in the context of the police and security services.

But the importance of FOI to consumers of goods and services cannot be understated. They need to know, for instance, whether the food they eat and the medicines they take have been properly tested.

Far too much crucial information still remains secret. If the act fails to resolve this, ministers will stand accused of watering down their manifesto commitment and putting their own interests before those of the electorate. Robin Simpson, Deputy Director, National Consumer Council.

Peer pressure

David McKie

THE LIFE barony conferred upon Norman Stewart Hughson Lamont has been gazetted by the name, style and title of Baron Lamont of Lerwick — of Lerwick in the Shetland Islands. This is disappointing. Behind the far-bidding beetle-browed frown, Lamont has always looked to me like a wild old romantic. The talent for ballroom dancing, the scrapes, the famous black eye sustained at the

hands of a wrathful husband — all pointed that way. With the whole of the Shetlands to choose from, he might have gone for something really alluring. To call himself Lord Whitensness would perhaps have been pushing his luck a little too far. Lord Starckgarth sounds a shade forbidding, evoking Cold Comfort Farm. Lord Scalloway comes too close for comfort to Scalloway. Lord Balausound might have made him sound sponsored.

But he could so easily have been Lord Symbister, Lord Sumburgh, Lord Sullum Voe, or even Lord Lerwick. A chance to brighten our lives has been recklessly cast aside.

Most of the new crop of life peers have made even more pedestrian choices. Sir Timothy John Leigh Bell has become Lord Bell. Sir Anthony Marton Grosvenor Christopher has chosen Lord Christopher. Melvyn Bragg, whom I would have backed to become at the very least Lord Bragg of Buttermerch, has stuck with

plain Lord Bragg. A new life peer has three choices. Suppose you're called Denis Toad and come from Tickhill, near Rotherham. The line of least resistance is to get yourself gazetted as Lord Toad, of Tickhill in the County of South Yorkshire. Next, a little more grandly, you could annex Tickhill as well, becoming Lord Toad of Tickhill, of Tickhill, etc etc, in which case you'd be known as Lord Toad of Tickhill.

That's what Norman Lamont has done with Lerwick, and what Professor Philip Norton has done with delightful Louth in Lincolnshire. The authorities may require you to do this if a simpler title is likely to cause confusion. There was no pre-existing Lord Lamont, but there is a Lord Norton, a hereditary peer, from whom the professor would have been required to distinguish himself.

The really daring choice is to ditch the name you were

born with and go for something grander or more evocative. The boldest instance of this in recent years was Ted Short, once Labour's deputy leader, who went to the Lords as Lord Glenamara, provoking the question on thousands of lips ever after: "Who the heck is Lord Glenamara?"

AMONG others who made the change, Alun Gwynne Jones, banished into a Wilson government as an expert on disarmament although he didn't belong to the Labour Party, became Lord Chalfont; Wilson's political secretary Marcia Williams, Lady Fulender; the historian Hugh Trevor-Roper, Lord Dacre; and the former Welsh secretary Nicholas Edwards, Lord Crickhowell.

Yet the fact that you're now a peer doesn't mean you can do just as you choose. An official, called the Garter Principal King of Arms, monitors all these decisions and will

disallow a name which seems too presumptuous or jolly. One newly ennobled peer who ran into trouble was the television entrepreneur Wahed Aili, who wanted to call himself Lord Aili of Greenwich or Lord Aili of Croydon. According to the Daily Telegraph, the Garter Principal King disallowed both. "He couldn't have Greenwich," this official is quoted as saying. "It is spoken by the Duke of Edinburgh. As for Croydon, I am not keen on giving out London boroughs. Those are reserved for dukes, earls and marquesses." This is all a little mysterious. If the Duke has bespoken Greenwich how come we have a life peer called Lord Harris of Greenwich? If London's reserved for the class of peer a Garter Principal King can really look up to, how does one explain Lord Wright and Fanshawe, both styled as of Richmond, Lord Greenhill of Harrow, Lord McIntosh of Haringey, Lord Perry of Southwark, or

Lady Turner of Camden — some gazetted within this decade? And who in any case are these dukes and earls and marquesses for whom the London boroughs have to be saved? Does the Garter King know something about Tony Blair's intentions which the rest of us don't? Yet it seems the new Lord Aili has no right of appeal, and now he is simply Lord Aili, of Norbury in the London Borough of Croydon; which makes him for every-day purposes plain Lord Aili, and not even Lord Aili of Norbury.

Very soon, of course, we ought to be rid of this antique humdrum. Those who make up the upper chamber will carry some title like Senator, or perhaps, as the new leader of the Lords, Lady Jay, proposed this weekend, will simply write ML — Member of the Lords — after their names. But it's sad, even so, that the Braggs and Lamonts should have denied us this final romantic flourish.

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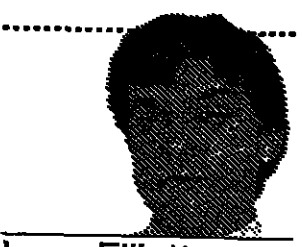
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Forget the unthinkable, remember the economy



Larry Elliott

Reform is fine, but work and care are better

APPEARENTLY it's all Chris Smith's fault. Back in the days when he was shadow social secretary, he said that Tony Blair had told him to go away and "think the unthinkable" — a soundbite he had actually coined himself while travelling to work on the bus.

Mr Blair is said to hate the phrase, presumably fearing that it may haunt him the way "Back to Basics" dogged John Major. Nevertheless, the Government insists that despite the departure of Frank Field from the Department for Social Security, its enthusiasm for radical reform of welfare is undimmed.

We shall see about that. The new man at the DSS, Alistair Darling, has adopted a brisk "let's get on with it" stance, but so far the Government has yet to come up with a coherent and convincing strategy.

The truth is that no one should be surprised, let alone alarmed, that there is as yet no blueprint for reform of a welfare system that costs £100 billion a year, has developed in all sorts of byzantine ways over the past 50 years and is now a tangle of complexities and contradictions. Peter Lilley found it nigh on impossible to back his way through the welfare jungle, and Mr Field is his 15 months at the DSS quickly came to the conclusion that there was no magic wand that could be waved without making lots of voters extremely unhappy.

So is welfare reform still-born? Not necessarily, but there are three ways of going about the task, and the Government needs to be clear which path it is following.

One method is to improve work incentives. The Government could make the centre-piece of its reform the desire that as many people as possible should be taken off benefits and found jobs.

This is really what Gordon Brown and Harriet Harman were trying to do with the New Deal and the counselling sessions for single parents. Taking people off benefits and putting them into work means that money can be moved from passive spending on welfare to active spending on health and education.

Part of the Government's armoury for sharpening incentives is to make benefits less generous or harder to get.

As such, the work-based approach is consistent with saving money. This is the second way in which reform of the Welfare State can be tackled, and some of the Government's comments suggest that "eliminating the price of economic failure" is at the heart of official thinking.

Finally, welfare reform can be used to alleviate poverty. This has also featured strongly over the past 15 months, not just in the creation of the Social Exclusion Unit, inside Downing Street and the Cabinet committee on Welfare Reform but in the quiet redistribution under way since the election.

But here's where the problems start. While it is perfectly possible to combine any two of these approaches, it's virtually impossible to have all three. For example, one way to tackle poverty without harming work incentives would be to scrap means testing and make benefits universal. But this would cost money, not save it.

Faced with this dilemma, the Government should look to its own core values and conclude that, for a centre-left party, tackling poverty and improving work incentives make precedence over saving money. In any case, once the social security budget is disaggregated, it rapidly becomes apparent that only a very small part of the £100 billion annual bill has anything to do with economic failure, and thus lends itself to savings.

Almost half — 44 per cent — goes to the elderly, who presumably are not considered to have failed simply by getting old. A quarter goes to the sick and disabled, and 19 per cent goes to supporting families. Are people to be considered to be failures because they have fallen sick or ill, or have been abandoned by their partners? If not, the Government is left merely with the 6 per cent of the welfare budget that goes to the unemployed.

Taken to extremes, a cost-based approach to welfare reform would be as hard-nosed as management consultancy — the so-called hyena approach in which those not fit enough to keep up with the rest of the herd — the old, the sick and the single parents — are picked off. It might be asked why the Government pays for hernia operations for 50-year-olds and why it is not exploring the possibility of introducing euthanasia for the terminally sick elderly, given that evidence shows that the cost of caring for people rises almost exponentially in the last few months of life. There is, of course, absolutely no question of the Government doing any such thing. Why? Because welfare reform is not just about cost, it is about decency and morality.

Once this is acknowledged, saving money can be put in its proper context — as a legitimate objective of welfare reform, but a secondary aim. It then leaves the Government free to get on with ensuring that people have jobs and that decent provision is made for those unable to fend for themselves.

These were the basic building blocks of the original Baring blueprint for welfare, in which the implicit social democratic bargain was that the government should create the working conditions in which individuals could look after their children but that the state would have the responsibility of caring for the old, the sick and the unfortunate.

Given Labour's emphasis on rights and responsibilities, it is still a bargain that has not been broken, even though life is more complex in the late 1990s than it was in the days of a labour market dominated by male full-time breadwinners. Indeed, one of the main themes of the report from the Commission for Social Justice, set up by John Smith after the 1992 election, was how to update Beveridge for a changed labour market by extending the contributory principle to women and part-timers.

BUT here's the rub. Any extension of the contributory principle would indicate that the Government was committed to universality, the opposite of what has been happening over the past year when there has been a gradual extension of means testing.

There has been nothing sinister about this. On the contrary, it has been the result of the Government's determination to move resources to people who really need them — hard-up pensioners and the working poor. Moreover, it is a perfectly legitimate argument that left-of-centre parties should not be doing out-

benefits to fat cats earning £1 million a year but should be concentrating on the needy.

But there are serious long-term risks involved with this strategy. Although the short-term impact may be to persuade taxpayers that their money is not being squandered, in the longer run it will almost certainly lead to a voters' revolt. In the US there is massive hostility to Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, even though the benefit is miserly.

Ultimately, universality is a way of recognising that individual selfishness exists but can be harnessed for a greater good. The middle classes will not say their taxes fund the welfare state if they know that they stand to get something out of the system.

So, for all its faults, universality has to stay. Additional means testing may be the answer to immediate problems but over the longer run

it is not the solution. Mr Field is right, for example, to point out that the minimum guarantee to pensioners makes it inevitable that the Government will have to make second pensions compulsory. Otherwise, there would be no incentive for people to save, because they could assume that the Government would always step in to support them. Unfortunately, those likely to be forced to take out second pensions are those in low-paid insecure jobs — the very people the Working Families Tax Credit is designed to help.

Does this mean that there can be no reform of welfare? Not necessarily. But it does mean that, to be workable, changes will be modest and piecemeal rather than Big Bang. The Welfare State is not ballooning out of control, and is not generous by international standards. Some benefits, particularly to pensioners — are too low rather than

too high. It may also mean that the Treasury takes responsibility for welfare reform. Not through a takeover of the DSS — which would be disastrous and simply hasten the triumph of means testing — but by getting the economy right.

How? First, by delivering strong growth and higher levels of prosperity. Second, by reducing income inequality, not just so that people can fend for themselves but to prevent pay-outs to the rich undermining the principle of universality.

Gordon Brown is convinced that his radical reforms of the economy raise the trend rate of growth and boost employment. If he's right there will be no need for radical surgery on the welfare state. In the end, it's as simple as that. In the end, the soundbite that matters is not "thinking the unthinkable" but the oldest and heaviest of the lot: "It's the economy, stupid."

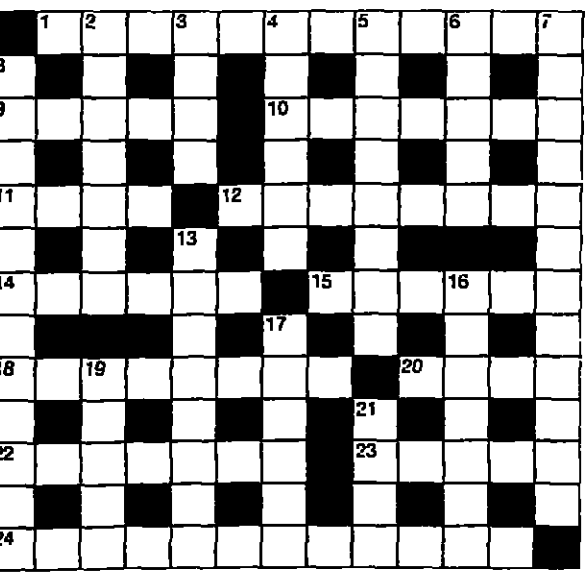


Tourist rates - bank sells

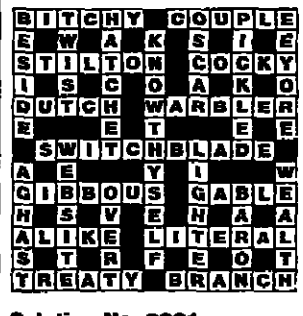
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Austria 19.68	Greece 465.60	Malta 0.622	South Africa 9.96
Belgium 57.89	Hong Kong 12.30	Netherlands 3.154	Spain 237.51
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Cyprus 0.824	Ireland 1.108	Norway 12.04	Switzerland 2.362
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Quick Crossword No. 8822



- Across**
- 1 Handyman's activity (2,2,8)
 - 9 Aquatic predator (5)
 - 10 Top of mineshaft (7)
 - 11 Identical (4)
 - 12 Base for basin? (5)
 - 14 Brief or present time (5)
 - 15 This way! (5)
 - 16 Half (4 detached) (4)
 - 22 One with little wealth (4-3)
 - 23 White rock (5)
 - 24 Apparatus in gymnasium (8,4)
- Down**
- 2 The best possible (7)
 - 3 Lacerated (4)
 - 4 Fish eagle (5)
 - 5 Economise (dig another ditch?) (8)
 - 6 Upstanding (5)
 - 7 Nonsense! (Violin bows?) (12)
 - 8 Equestrian skill (12)
 - 13 Hellish (8)
- 18 Space out of doors (4,3)**
19 Englishman's home? (6)
20 Large stream (5)
21 Crust formed over wound (4)



Solution No. 8821

Dollar checks progress of Cuba's poor

Briefing

Richard Derecki

FORTY years ago Fidel Castro's small band of revolutionaries were facing a choice. They could be slaughtered by the Cuban dictator Fulgencio Batista to convert them from their stronghold in the Sierra Maestra, the mountain range in the south-east of the island. The war of "national liberation" was into its second year and given Batista's superiority in terms of arms and men, the chances of Castro lasting the year, let alone going on to capture Havana, seemed very small.

But Castro's nerve held. Batista's offensive was repelled and six months later, on December 31, 1958, he fled Havana with his inner circle of

ministers, police officers, and mafia casino owners. Che Guevara took control of Havana and Castro of Santiago, the second city.

The guiding principle behind the revolt had been the need for social justice. Castro's "revolutionary laws", elucidated in speeches and pamphlets in the early 1950s called for agricultural reform, educational and housing reform. Leaving aside the vexed issue of political reforms, 40 years on has the revolution made a difference to the social conditions and living standards of the poor and of working class Cubans?

Assessing the performance of the Cuban economy relative to other developing countries is always difficult because in an economy where prices and quantities to be produced are set centrally by the state, output is measured in a different way than in

more "capitalist" economies. These data can be converted for comparative purposes but a major drawback is that of valuing Cuban output in a common currency, say dollars, when the exchange rate has, to all intents and purposes been fixed for 40 years so that the "real" value of Cuban produce is unclear.

Rather than look to compare monetary values for certain outputs the United Nations has devised a Human Development Index.

The HDI uses indicators of the most basic dimensions of deprivation: a short life (the percentage of people expected to die before 40), lack of education (the percentage of adults who are illiterate) and lack of access to public and private resources (the percentage of people without access to health services and safe water and the percentage of underweight children under five), to assess

a country's standing in basic human development and its progress in human development over time.

In terms of accessing these basic attributes of a humane society Cuba scores very highly. In the most recent index set out in the 1997 Human Development Report, Cuba is in the top group of five developing countries which have reduced human poverty to the point at which it affects less than 10 per cent of the population.

Cuba's performance is above Costa Rica, and way above that of Jamaica, El Salvador and Haiti.

The delivery of a better relative living standard for Cuba's poor was achieved in a crude and utilitarian fashion by guaranteeing a minimum subsistence level and making access to education and health services free at the point of delivery. The ration card, introduced in 1962, still

plays a central part in determining what will be on the dining table for the majority of Cubans, and it is a powerful symbol both of the Cuban state's commitment to an equitable distribution of the economy's resources and of its inability to create sufficient growth to float the bulk of the Cuban people off dependence on the state.

Universal access to basic foods and services has, however, been undermined following the legalisation of the use of the US dollar in 1993. This is creating in an arbitrary fashion a sharply divided two-tier society with those having access to dollars (say through having a relative in the US) being able to buy better food and foreign medicines. Widespread use of the dollar has also distorted the wage structure so that waiters in a tourist restaurant can earn more in tips

than a qualified lawyer, teacher or doctor.

With the economy still struggling to adjust to the collapse of export markets in Eastern Europe and with no sign of a let-up in the US embargo, there is an uncanny reflection of the economy of 40 years ago — stagnant, still dependent on sugar as its main export and reliant on tourism as the main motor for economic activity.

The new struggle for the leaders who will follow Castro is likely to take place in boardrooms and conference centres across the world as they make their appeals for foreign investment and debt restructuring. Whether Castro's "revolutionary laws" are part of their sales pitch or are quietly abandoned as a hindrance will determine whether, over the longer term, the revolution will have made a difference.

Economics made easy

Charlotte Denny

Every September the Government publishes the Blue Book, the value of transactions carried out in the economy in the previous year. It also publishes more timely interim accounts every three months for the previous quarter but these tend to be revised while Blue Book figures are more accurate.

What is in the Blue Book?
Two main kinds of account — production and income and expenditure but also capital and financial accounts.

What's the point of it all?
It's only by measuring how much activity is going on that statisticians can come up with an estimate of GDP and get an idea of how fast it is growing. Figuring out the growth rate is vital for setting economic policy.

Who invented the national accounts?
The first Blue Book was published in 1952, but the system of national accounts was a by-product of the Keynesian revolution in economics in the 1930s. Keynes practically invented macroeconomics — the study of

economic aggregates — but to study things like investment and savings, the Keynesians had to measure them first.

Who decides what gets measured?
There are international rules for what goes into the national accounts. One of the conventions for example is that housework is excluded — although if you pay someone to clean your house that would be counted. That's because the accounts generally stick to measuring activities which take place in the market — goods and services someone

pays for. The rules were developed in 1979 but are due to change next month.

What happens then?
ESA 95 comes into play in the UK. That stands for the European System of Accounts which is the EU's development of the international rules set by the United Nations.

Will it make much difference?
Many of the changes are about definitions but they will impact on past estimates of the size of the economy. For example

spending on computer software has traditionally been counted as an input into other productive activity and hence doesn't count towards GDP which measures final value added. From now on software spending will be counted as investment — which is a component of GDP. This will increase estimates of the size of the economy in recent years. On the other hand changing the base for constant price estimates of the economy (the measure which strips out the effects of inflation from 1990 prices to 1995 prices) will probably reduce growth estimates.

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The Guardian Sport

Monday August 10 1998 www.football.guardian.co.uk

Roller-coaster ride for 1.5 at Headingley



Eight down, two to go: the England pace bowler Darren Gough sinks to his knees after trapping Mark Boucher leg-before — his fifth wicket of the innings — as the evening shadows lengthened at Leeds

England v South Africa: fifth Cornhill Test, fourth day

England balanced on a knife-edge

Two wickets to take the series with South Africa 34 runs from victory

David Hopps finds weary troops content for a good night's rest before final assault

TWELVE years since a major series win is long enough but last night, as England fretted over their fate, must have seemed interminable. An extraordinary Test of excruciating tension and lurching fortunes is reborn this morning with England needing two wickets and South Africa 34 runs. Only the foolhardy would begin to predict the outcome. To suspend play in such circumstances last night, with South Africa 185 for eight and no recourse to the extra half-hour, was maddening for a crowd beside itself with exhilaration. Darren Gough, revealing in the Headingley day he has dreamed of since childhood, was in his element but England's overworked three-

man seam attack was close to exhaustion. England's calculation was that a night's rest will do the trick, that is if anybody is able to sleep. Gough's jolly, baring strut dominated a final hour which strengthened England's hold on a final Cornhill Test that a gutsy and positive century stand, from the calamity of 27 for five, by Jonty Rhodes and Brian McMillan had threatened to swing in South Africa's favour. Here was a fast bowler in his element, roared forward by his home crowd, theatrically doffing his cap to the Western Terrace as every wicket brought fresh adulation. He resumes today with five for 36 in 19 overs and, if England win, he has assured himself of a place in folklore. How many more twists can these two sides withstand? Yesterday alone produced an England batting collapse — their last six wickets tumbling for 34 runs for the second time in the match — a South African collapse of even greater proportions and a magnificent recovery. Gough only ticked off Gerhardus Liebenberg by lunch, the opener's pitiable series ending with a ball that cut back to have him lbw. Gary Kirsten, his Old Trafford double-century apart, has also had an unproductive time; Gough removed him immediately after the interval as Michael Atherton held on at gully. Darryl Cullinan, leg-before, was the third victim in a new-ball spell of three for 10 in nine overs. The pitch was rarely to play as unevenly as England had hoped but Jacques Kallis's tentative push at Angus Fraser, to be leg-before, illus-

trated South African apprehension. As questionable decisions continue to multiply, the broad smile has become the new form of dissent. Hansie Cronje departed like the Cheeshire Cat as he was adjudged caught at the wicket in Fraser's next over, endless television replays failing to determine whether or not the ball had flicked the edge. Rhodes's adrenalin-fuelled rush to the crease was backed up by an immediately positive outlook. His early Test innings were often tortuous; now he bristles with attacking intent. McMillan, in the first innings, had looked bereft of form but South Africa's desperate situation whetted his competitive instincts. It was during Ian Salisbury's eight overs on either side of tea, again plagued by full tosses and long hops, that England's attack looked enfeebled. Every over Salisbury bowled encouraged regret that England had preferred the leg-spinner to Alan Mullally, an extra seamer. When England failed to persuade the umpires to change the ball, their concern was evident. Dominic Cork sought a spark, almost hysterically at times, and McMillan, met by a second bouncer in one over, skied his hook to Stewart. That cleared the way for Gough. Rhodes (85 from 147 balls) became his 100th Test victim when he clipped him to Flintoff at short midwicket. Mark Boucher fell lbw and Gough bounded around with an air of tomfoolery as if he was engaged in a welly chucking competition at a local summer fete. Another England batting collapse had dominated the morning. After the solidity of Saturday, when Nasser Hus-

sain edged England to 206 for four, came chaos, engineered by a world-class fast bowler. Alan Donald, 32 in October, looks farewell to Test cricket in England with a tenacious morning spell of four for 14 in 9.2 overs, driven by a sense of his place in history. Shaun Pollock surfed on Donald's emotional wave to take the other two wickets. The blitz from the only two South African bowlers given licence to attack, and resuming with a new ball only 11 overs old, was irresistible. Donald's affinity with England, sharpened by his seasons at Warwickshire, has driven him forward all summer. The magnitude of his summer, 33 wickets at 19.78 when not fully fit, can hardly be understated. The nightwatchman, Salisbury, was dispensed with by the second ball of the morning, edging to the wicket-keeper, Boucher. But it was the dismissals of Hick and Flintoff with the first and last deliveries of Donald's second over — both measured at 75mph, about 10mph below his average pace — that left England's innings in ruins. To observe Hick's tortured departure yesterday, as he slapped a wide, near half-volley to extra cover, was to be convinced that his Test career must this time be over. It was the whey-faced expression of a man who had recognised his own fate, a prodigious accumulator overcome by the fierce mental demands of Test cricket. In its way it was immensely sad. Flintoff, whose own career has hardly begun, proved as fallible against Donald's slower ball, edging to Boucher. England had lost three wickets for one run in 23 balls. Nasser Hussain, leaning on his bat at the non-striker's end, must have wondered at the absurdity of it all. He continued with forbearance, pulling Pollock imperiously but then driving prematurely at the same bowler and arm-swinging in annoyance as the ball dropped gently to Cronje at extra cover. His 94 had spanned more than seven hours, its painstaking nature entirely apt. Cork's edge to Boucher gave him 26 dismissals, only two short of Rodney Marsh's world record for wicketkeeping victims in a series.

Stewart prolongs agony

Paul Weaver
ACROWD of over 10,000 was left perplexed in the Leeds long shadows last night when the teams left the field with South Africa only 34 runs short of victory. At the close of play the England team, together with the two batsmen, made their way towards the pavilion. It was then that South Africa's 12th man, Paul Allan, ran out with a message for Allan Donald to carry on, but after some hesitation they all came off. England's captain Alec Stewart

had decided he wanted the match to be carried over. A spokesman for the England and Wales Cricket Board said: "The umpire Peter Willey asked Donald if he wanted to come off and he said no. It was then that Adams came out but Willey decided that at the current scoring rate the match could not be concluded within the extra half-hour." Bob Woolmer, the South Africa coach, said: "We're not upset about it. Paul told Allan to carry on if he could, but to be honest I was not sure of the rules." The playing conditions state that

either captain can decide to play for an extra half-hour, or a maximum of eight overs, if he feels he can get a result. Meanwhile, England's Darren Gough, whose five for 36 included his 100th Test victim, said: "This is a great series and the last two matches have been the best ever. And what a great finish. "People have said that I've got carried away playing in front of my own supporters but I proved them wrong today. I think I've matured as a cricketer. "The first hour tomorrow will be great."

Another England batting collapse had dominated the morning. After the solidity of Saturday, when Nasser Hus-

Scoreboard

ENGLAND First innings 200 (M A Boucher 118, New 4-77)	
SOUTH AFRICA First innings 252 (W J Cronje 57, Fraser 5-42)	
Second innings (overnight 2-0)	
M A Boucher c McMillan b Pollock	37
M A Atherton lbw b Donald	31
T A J Stewart c Boucher b Pollock	28
M R Parnpachan lbw b Pollock	25
W Hussain c Cronje b Pollock	24
D S Cork c Boucher b Pollock	1
G A Hick c Kirsten b Donald	1
A Flintoff c Boucher b Donald	10
D S Cork c Boucher b Donald	10
D Gough c Cullinan b Donald	6
A C G Fraser not out	1
Extras (b14, lb1, w2, nb10)	27
Total (110.2 overs)	240
Fall of wickets 2, 81, 143, 200, 206, 207, 207, 208, 226	
Reverting Pollock 25-14-53-3; Donald 26-2-3-7-0; McMillan 11-8-25-0; Flintoff 10-4-5-0; Kallis 15-3-15-0; Cullinan 1-0-1-0; Cronje 4-1-4-0	
SOUTH AFRICA Second innings	
G Kirsten c Atherton b Gough	3
G F J Liebenberg lbw b Gough	6
J H Kallis bow b Fraser	0
D J Cullinan bow b Gough	0
W J Cronje c Stewart b Fraser	0
B M McMillan c Flintoff b Gough	54
S M Pollock not out	24
M V Boucher lbw b Gough	2
A A Donald not out	4
Extras (nb, nb)	4
Total (for 68 overs)	193
Fall of wickets 8, 12, 12, 12, 27, 144, 167, 175	
To leave M Hussain 23-5-50-0; Cork 17-1-50-1; Flintoff 4-0-15-0; Salisbury 8-0-34-0	
Umpires: David Allan and P Willey	



Stumbling block... Jonty Rhodes pulls Ian Salisbury to leg during a defiant innings of 85

Nationwide League First Division

Crystal Palace 2 Bolton Wanderers 2

Eagles follow familiar flight

Russell Thomas sees rebuilt Palace start less than royally

A NEW, thrusting chairman, revamped behind-the-scenes structure and, most of all, worldly El Tel up front as head coach: it seemed as if a new, exotic club had been magically transported to the suburban fields of London SE25. These opening-day Eagles, however, were birds of a very familiar feather.

The performance could not match the pre-match razzmatazz. The players emerged to the raucous strains of Glad All Over by the Dave Clark Five, whose Tottenham Sound was once fatuously tipped to eclipse the Mersey Sound. Terry Venables's grand entrance was accompanied, to initial puzzlement, by Bye Bye Blackbird. It turned out to be an old recording by the same-time crooner but he could not recall it. "I don't think so," he said, scratching his head.

There was much metaphorical head-scratching by Venables as Crystal Palace opened the new season discordantly. But only briefly in the first half did he emerge from the dug-out to replace his No. 2 Terry Fenwick as the main touchline gesticulator. The head coach was not pleased. Venables stayed on his feet as his new charges found their feet in the second period. But the most chilling moment of a brooding afternoon came a minute into added time when the Icelandic substitute Arnar Gunnlaugsson struck with a thunderous shot. Even Venables did not deny Bolton deserved it.

Afterwards Venables was, as ever, amusingly up-beat while clearly knowing the score. He is aware a Palace is not built in a day, just as a team is not destined to dominate a decade on the strength of one brilliant year. But yes, he was glad to be back at Selhurst Park and coaching a League side, manoeuvring quickly past the prickly Portsmouth experience. "That was a different job... I just want to look forward," Venables has a two-fold task, according to the chair-

man Mark Goldberg, "to achieve an early return to the top flight... and to eliminate the tag of yo-yo club for ever". Bolton, who have also been oscillating with Palace in this twilight zone, provided early evidence of how hard the first part will be.

Venables consoled himself with the thought that Bolton "may be as strong as we'll get", and that his half-time directions had been heeded after a first period dominated by Colin Todd's more fluent, physically stronger team. "We broke up Bolton's rhythm," he said. "But overall I can't be too disappointed about losing a goal in the last minute."

Venables's dressing-room could easily have resounded to smashed crockery after such a setback. But the head coach has "never been a cup-thrasher. Fear is not what you're after. If the team's confidence is low, you have to massage it up again."

The new Palace regime can already claim to have lifted morale by holding on to the sought-after youngster Matt Jansen and the experienced midfielder Attilio Lombardo and Sasa Curcic as well as the captain Marc Edworthy, whom Venables surprisingly dropped to the bench.

The squad may be reinforced today when two China internationals, Fan Zhi and Sun-Ghi, are due to report as part of Palace personnel about which Venables feels "very confident. I've seen enough to think we are a good team and we have to be one that's efficient to play against. Then we have to get serious."

Bolton got serious from the start and Neil Cox and Dean Holdsworth should have scored before the former Wimbledon striker curled home a shot that utterly deceived Kevin Miller after 33 minutes. Two goals inside 11 minutes after the break from Jansen and Curcic, the Serbian driving in a superb angled volley, raised Selhurst temperatures further only to be dramatically lowered by Gunnlaugsson's equaliser.

Venables was as philosophical about his future as he was about the result. "If I do well, everybody's happy. If I don't, then we all know what happens. The pressure is greater all the time."



Getting carried away... Matt Jansen takes Sasa Curcic for a ride after scoring Crystal Palace's 50th-minute equaliser against Bolton

PHOTOGRAPH BY SHALIN BOTTERILL

Vulnerable Venables not so venerable

Jon Brodtkin discovers that not all Crystal Palace fans are keen on the return of El Tel with his regal wave and thumbs-up sign

IT WAS a welcome fit for a king, never mind a former manager. A booming cheer reverberated around Selhurst Park as the figure with the cheeky grin, jaunty gait and receding hair strode on to the pitch. Yes, Attilio Lombardo was back for the new season.

Terry Venables was making his return too, of course, 18 years and several court cases after walking out on Crystal Palace. A regal wave and a thumbs-up suggested he was ready for the hazy-busy of the First Division after his exertions on the international

stage with one of football's lesser lights.

His stint on ITV's World Cup panel over, El Tel was raring to go. He received a rapturous reception. But once the dust had settled it became clear the head coach is not as popular as it might have seemed.

"When he came back, a lot of the hard-core fans were not happy," said Laurie Dahl, editor of the fanzine Palace Echo. "People remember what happened in 1980, when he left and took half the team with him for very little money. That created a lot of ill-feeling. There's also some ill-feeling about the

amount of money he's getting."

With a reported salary of £750,000 a year, Venables is unlikely to be a regular at his local soup kitchen. Whether he will be a regular at Selhurst Park remains to be seen. He has attended one of the two games there so far, skipping the Inter-Toto Cup match against Sampdoria to rest his tonsils after France 98.

"A lot of us were very unhappy, particularly as the TV stuff meant he didn't come in until well into pre-season training," said Dahl. "A crowd of 12,000 showed how seriously Palace fans took it. It seems

Venables fancied a big, dramatic entrance."

He got one, of sorts, addressing more than 5,000 fans from a stage on the pitch at the club's open day on August 2. The most exciting game he had ever been involved in, he told them, was not at Euro 96, the FA Cup final with Tottenham or the European Cup final with Barcelona; it was when Palace beat Wrexham to clinch promotion from the Third Division in 1977.

"I shook his hand afterwards," said one fan, "but I warned him: 'Don't shit on us again.' The way he looked at me told me he had no answer."

The fans fear he could abandon them again, particularly as his five-year contract has got on in

years one and three. "I wouldn't be surprised to see him leave if we're not doing well," said Dahl. "But he's shown his worth by keeping Matt Jansen and whatever else you might think of him. You can't question his coaching credentials."

Palace fans know that better than most. He took the club from the old Third Division to the First Division in three seasons before resigning, he says, because his job was offered to another manager.

During much of the first half on Saturday he looked desperate for such an out. But, love him or loathe him, Palace fans do not want to lose him. Venables's most memorable moment came when their curious dog mascot pretended to relieve himself on the visitors' goalposts before the kick-off.



Venables... second coming

Sunderland 1 Queens Park Rangers 0

Clark's injury takes edge off penalty kick-start

Michael Walker

THERE were symmetry and sympathy in Sunderland on Saturday and a hint of Alan Shearer too.

The latter, sadly for Sunderland fans, is not a reference to the welcome return to first-team action of Michael Bridges with all his Shearer connotations but instead to Lee Clark's critical injury, apparently caused by his studs' abrupt snaring in the turf just as Shearer did a year ago at Goodison Park.

Shearer's ruptured ankle caused him to miss six months of Newcastle's season and on Saturday Clark broke the fibula in his right leg, an injury that on Peter Reid's immediate diagnosis may leave Clark on the treatment table for "a few months".

Thus Sunderland could be waiting until Christmas for the return of their playmaker and most influential midfielder.

"There was a strong, bloated silence from the largest crowd in England, 41,008, as Clark was carried away down the tunnel, as if they genuinely could not believe what they were seeing, although Reid injected some humour into the situation. Asked if Clark had said anything on the way past the bench, Reid replied: "Yeah, ahhh...". Reid, however, is aware of Clark's importance and it will be a major surprise if the Sunderland manager does not enter the transfer market immediately. He indicated yesterday that he will spend if he can. "I know who I want and, if I can get him, I'll bring him in but I have to buy someone better than those I have already got."

Happier news is that Reid confirmed that Clark has not sustained any ligament damage. Nevertheless, the injury overshadowed the result, the first time Sunderland have won their opening-day fixture this decade.

The victory came courtesy of a refereeing decision by Chris Foy that granted Sunderland a penalty 15 minutes from the end, a time when Ray Harford and Vinnie Jones felt their side had finally stifled the opposition's invention.

"They had a point, Sunderland began with the expected rush of breathless pressure and Lee Harper in the Ranger's goal made a crucial early one-handed save from Niall Quinn. Rangers did create some danger of their own and, though Harper made two more fine first half stops, from Quinn and Kevin Ball, Thomas Sorensen on his debut made two at the other end.

Had Mike Sheron been fit QPR could even have taken a lead. But Sheron, who scored a late brace here in April to secure the point that ultimately meant the difference between QPR's survival and Manchester City's relegation, was hamstrung and Kevin Gallen was unable to muster the power to beat Sorensen.

QPR looked, nevertheless, to be heading for another point until Quinn collided with the Rangers keeper, illegally Harford felt, and it was easy to sympathise with him. Ball stabbed a shot goalwards, Ian Baraclough handled on the line and Sunderland had their penalty. Baraclough was sent off, Kevin Phillips scored and Sunderland, the team that experienced so much penalty kick anxiety at the end of last season, had got a measure of penal reform at the beginning of this. On a day of sympathy for Lee Clark, that provided a certain symmetry.

Port Vale 0 Birmingham City 2

Blues extend purple patch

Mark Redding

THIS could be a momentous season for Birmingham City. Undeated in six pre-season friendlies, with wins over Manchester United, Tottenham Hotspur and Sheffield Wednesday, they kept up the good work with a comfortable victory away to what is now the top club in Stoke.

The Blues were not merely hitting a purple patch, their manager was keen to emphasise. "Our run is not just pre-season, it stretches back to November," said Trevor Francis. "What we've seen in the last few weeks is a continuation of what we started last year."

Indeed, a glance at the crisp new Rothmans shows that, starting on November 29, Birmingham embarked on a run of 27 League games that included 14 wins and only three defeats. They missed out on the play-offs to Sheffield United only on goals scored.

The word being bandied around Britain's second city is stability. Only Steve Bruce has been allowed to leave, for Sheffield United, and no players have been bought — a far cry from the days when Barry Fry traded players like children's Panini stickers.

Francis knows the pressure is on him to deliver and nothing short of promotion will do. His term of office expires next season and the care-worn manager has yet to autograph the one-year roll-over contract on offer. "There isn't a problem and I'm sure I'll sign soon," he said, but it is conceivable that this could be his last season.

Should he stay or should he go, Francis's aura will continue to surround Birmingham City. Its latest manifestation is an offer by the club's sponsor Auto Windscreens of a £25,000 BMW to any player who manages 25 goals this season, it being the 21st anniversary of Francis scoring 27 in the 1977-78 season, a figure not since beaten.

The Blues as a whole, it seems, have given themselves over to the anniversary walk. It is 100 years since Walter Abbott scored a record 42 goals in a season, and Saturday's match marked the meeting with which both clubs began their league existence in 1892 — the then Small Heath having beaten the then Burnley Port Vale 5-1 at home.

Birmingham were never going to emulate that score in the energy-sapping heat but a solid if unspectacular display

saw Paul Furlong, from a short free-kick in the first half, and Dele Adebola, with a breakaway goal in the second, go one-third of the way to earning themselves a German rep's fleet car.

Port Vale, who had sold their talented striker Lee Mills to Bradford City for £1 million the night before, defended too deep to be a threat and for them another relegation battle loomed. Vale's most memorable moment came when their curious dog mascot pretended to relieve himself on the visitors' goalposts before the kick-off.

"There's an air of optimism and I just hope it's not over the top," said Francis. With league games now against Crystal Palace, Sheffield United and Barnsley, they have a chance to show what they are made of.

Forest send Scholar to tempt back Hooijdonk

NOTTINGHAM Forest are preparing a last-ditch attempt to persuade the striker Pierre van Hooijdonk to stay at the City Ground after refusing to sanction his transfer request. Irving Scholar, Forest's football consultant, will fly to Holland today for talks with the player, who has refused to return to Nottingham for pre-season training.

Thierry Henry, one of France's World Cup winners, has asked for a transfer from Monaco so he can join his former manager Arsène Wenger. "I want to leave and it's Arsenal and nowhere else that I want to go," Henry said.

He added that, though the Monaco president Jean-Louis Campora had told him there had been no official offer from Arsenal, Wenger had assured him that Arsenal had made a bid.

The Sunderland coach Tony Coton may face the sack after deciding to sue the club for £500,000 over the injury that ended his playing career. The 37-year-old was not at Sunderland's game against QPR on Saturday and he has been ordered to stay away from the training ground.

Coton alleges that Sunderland failed to arrange suitable disability cover after he was badly injured in a collision with Southampton's Egil Osstenstad in October 1996. He needed surgery on a leg broken in five places and underwent a further operation when it did not heal as well as expected.

Bristol City are hoping to sign the Middlesbrough midfielder Phil Stamp and have offered £500,000. Gary Mabbutt will be unable to complete his transfer to Fulham because he needs a knee operation. The 36-year-old was released by Tottenham in the summer after nearly 16 years at the club and had hoped to seal a move to Craven Cottage in the next month.



Victory salute... Kevin Phillips celebrates his goal

Handwritten text in a box: "مكتبة جامعة القاهرة"

FA Charity Shield

Martin Thorpe sees Arsenal quickly pick up the thread at Wembley and needle their Premiership rivals again

United look anything but super

MANCHESTER United produced no breakaways, were definitely not super and often looked out of their league. Had one not known better, it would have been difficult to recognise yesterday's lot as the team the billion-pound greediest organisers need to help launch the tournament of tomorrow.

Perhaps United were allowing themselves a foretaste of what life will be like in a European Super League, where defeat has no bearing on their participation in the following season's competition.

Arsenal simply resumed where they left off so impressively last season: they were sharp, organised, purposeful and showed that same vital understanding as a unit. Their manager

was a real test for him and he needed that. I thought he did well. I think he can play much better but the important thing was he came through it."

In mitigation of United's disappointing performance, they must have had Wednesday's Champions League qualifying tie against Poland's LES Lodz at Old Trafford on their minds and, once they went a goal behind, the oppressive heat of the day made it difficult for them to chase the game.

After the second goal United all but conceded defeat and brought off several of the players they hope will influence events the day after tomorrow, including Roy Keane who, after 11 months out, understandably looked short of match sharpness.

Though Ferguson, like Wenger, is looking to buy another striker, both were keeping tight-lipped on the subject yesterday. Ferguson said of Old Trafford's seemingly eternal pursuit of Dwight Yorke: "I can't tell you if I will put in another bid this week. I need to speak to my chairman." But he added: "I'm trying to create a situation where I've got a good pool of players. If we got another striker it would just give me that little advantage."

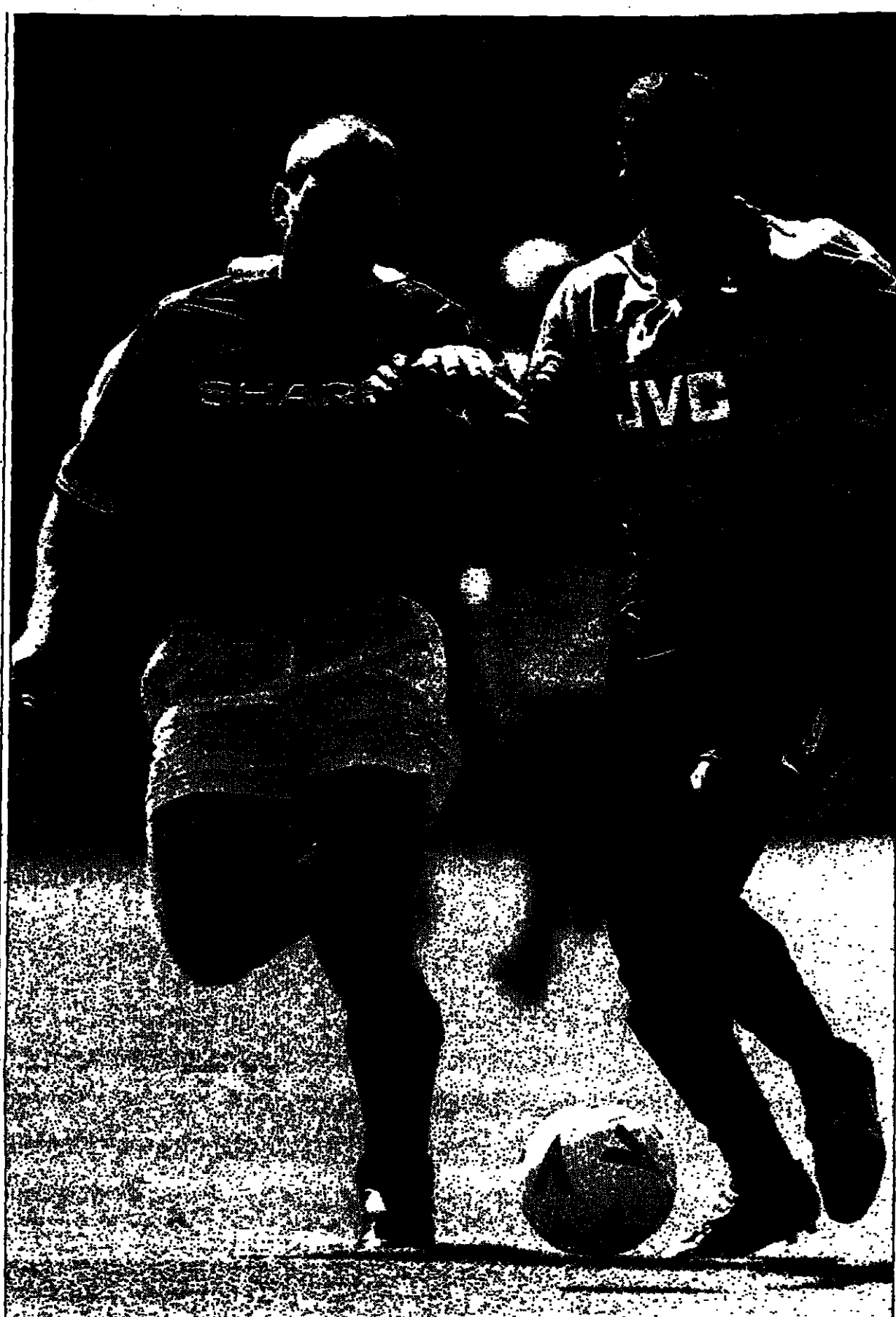
Meanwhile Wenger was flattered but annoyed by reports that France's World Cup winger Thierry Henry wants to join Arsenal. "We are happy to hear that he wants to join us," he said, "but his situation is very clear. He has a four- or five-year contract and Monaco does not want to sell."

"But we are short of one striker, that's for sure, and we have to find one before the Champions League deadline of August 20. The problem is that, though we have some young strikers, Boa Morte plays on the left side and is not a central striker, while Wreh, like Bergkamp, is more of a supportive striker. So we have really up front only Anelka as a central striker and, if something happens to him at the moment, we are in trouble."

Arsenal would like to make an impact in this season's Champions League, but only if they can avoid the fate of their UEFA Cup first-round exits of the past two seasons but also to support their case to be at the forefront of the new Super League.

United would like to do the same, but, here again, failure will severely harm their long-term prospects.

David Lacey reports from Wembley, page 24



Wembley pushover... Jaap Stam gets the brush-off as Nicolas Anelka muscled in for Arsenal's third goal STEPHEN WAKE

Blame it on the sun, sarong and new strip



Jim White

THE Charity Shield may have lost much of its potency, brought forward to Sunday lunchtime when sensible people are engaged with the cricket, but one aspect of it remains intact: it is the traditional curtain-raiser to the season's new kits.

This year Manchester United will step out in red nylon, with black diamond trim, and an odd zip arrangement on the collar which looks as if someone mispinned the fly. Though whether they will still be in it at the end of the season is open to doubt; after this performance their manager will be looking for something to blame for his players' inability to pick each other out with a pass.

Other vital issues were raised by this first big game since the World Cup: would we be treated to a decent new David Beckham chant? Sadly there was little invention on display down Wembley Way, where the Arsenal fans contented themselves with the old libel about his girlfriend.

Oddly it has taken Beckham's World Cup indiscretion for United followers to have woken up to the fact that the player is in their team at all. In truth, at Old Trafford they had never much taken to Beckham. With his blood rinse and celebrity engagement he was reckoned too flash, too fast, altogether too Cockney.

Now that everyone else hates him, however, they have rallied round the lad. Thus was the United end of the stadium peppered with Beckham shirts. And, fuelling up at a burger stand, a United fan of sufficient vintage to have seen the Bushy Babes was displaying the ultimate in devotion: he was wearing a sarong.

Beckham was not the only player on display to have his public perception completely changed by the World Cup. Only a month on from the final and Arsenal have reappeared as a team packed with world beaters. Collectively they had a significantly better France 98 than their rivals, Dennis Bergkamp, Tony Adams and Emmanuel Petit emerged as players of rather higher reputation than Teddy

Sheringham, Beckham and Jaap Stam, whose style United fans with long memories will recognise: this is Jim Holton with alopecia.

Even those Arsenal players who did not go to France saw their stature grow. Nigel Winterburn can now be recognised as the best left-back in England, while Nicolas Anelka did that rare thing for a French forward; he scored.

United, meanwhile, just seem to be stuffed with hate figures. Alongside Beckham was Roy Keane. Appropriately enough for Keane's return, this match was sponsored by a life insurance company and the Irishman signalled his intent by stepping out in Eric Cantona's old hair, a No. 1 crop of snarling menace. Now all it needs is for Paul Scholes to run over the Queen Mother and United will have the complete no-one-likes-us, we-don't-care midfield.

Despite the infinite boogie opportunities as their team exercised the kind of control few could have anticipated, as Marc Overmars and Anelka tormented Stam, Arsenal's fans began to lose interest in Beckham.

Falling back into the kind of parochial rivalries which suggest the European Super League will never be as popular in the stands as in the boardrooms, the Arsenal fans enjoyed themselves hugely mocking the former Spurs Teddy Sheringham. By the end, though, they had even given up booing Teddy. The noise emanating from the massed ranks of north Londoners sounded conspicuously like purring.

It may have been hot and a meaningless friendly, and United may have a European engagement on Wednesday, but you can see why they were so happy: not many will beat Arsenal this year.



Beckham... banner backed

Nationwide League

First Division: Sheffield United 2 Swindon Town 1

Blades come out fighting for Bruce

Adam Sills

ACENTURY ago Sheffield United were celebrating victory over Celtic in the unofficial Championship of Great Britain with Jim Almond scoring the crucial goal in a 2-1 aggregate win.

A repeat of that score in Saturday's nervy triumph over Swindon will not have convinced the faithful that the glory days are set to return, despite the boost of a new manager and centre-half in Steve Bruce.

On this showing Bruce will find emulating Almond's success a tough nut to crack. The former Manchester United captain described his managerial debut as "one of the most nerve-racking things I've done in the last 20 years", and will know that investment in players will be crucial to any hopes of promotion.

It is where the money is go-

ing to come from that concerns the fans; the development of a leisure park and a hotel at Euxine Lane seem to be the board's top priority.

Wherever it comes from, it will have to be well spent, which was how United's front line of Dean Saunders and Gareth Taylor looked in the opening hours. When United did strike, it was courtesy of the head of the midfielder Graham Stuart and a stunning free-kick from the Greek right wing-back Vass Borbokin on half-time.

"He has unbelievable qualities and is as good a crosser as I've seen," Bruce said. Holding on to talents such as him and the young left wing-back Wayne Quinn is crucial. Bruce made his intentions clear: "I'm determined to build a squad here and it's no good me selling my best players. If it happens, then I'm not a happy chap."

He certainly was not content after 11 minutes when a

dozen players decided that, after the niceties of the World Cup, what the new season needed was a spot of old-fashioned, fistful, sentimentality shared by the referee Phil Richards who saw fit merely to caution one player. "It was handbags until I got one on the chin," Bruce said.

One hangover from France 96 was the dramatic fall by United's Roger Nilsen after a challenge by Darren Bullock. The centre-half's insistence that the Swindon player "grabbed my throat and squeezed it" seemed an exaggeration.

Swindon showed enough pace up front to suggest that they can reverse the horrors of last season, when they plummeted to a final position of 18th having led the division after 17 games. Mark Walters was the catalyst of their attack and it was his cross which David Holdsworth smashed spectacularly into his own net to set up a nervy last half-hour for the Blades.



Blades' flashpoint... Sheffield United's Roger Nilsen lies prone as tempers flare around him SOF COLLIER

Grimsby Town 0 Ipswich Town 0

Wright proves a fine point

Michael Walker

ONE WEEK before Ipswich Town's highly coveted youngsters, the 20-year-old goalkeeper Richard Wright and teenage midfielder Kieron Dyer, join up in England at Euxine Abbey they delivered the kind of individual performances that fully justify their inclusion in Glenn Hoddle's present and future thoughts.

Still, even combined, they could win Ipswich yesterday's game and Wright's prominence was indicative of Grimsby's enterprising afternoon. He made a second minute penalty save from Kingsley Smith, looked distinctly uncomfortable with Pette's pace and they must have thought they had enough to worry about with David Johnson, scorer of 26 goals last season, lurking in the middle.

But Johnson was destined to have a chanceless match and it

was Dyer who stretched Aidan Davison in the Grimsby goal the most. Half an hour had gone when another unsettling dart by Pette forced Grimsby on to the back foot again. The ball fell to Dyer at an awkward height and angle and he did well to improvise and bring a fingertip save from Davison with volley on the run.

Prior to that and until half-time Ipswich, in the words of Buckley, "showed what a good team they are". But after the break his own men were in the ascendancy.

Yet Wright, while under aerial pressure from free-kicks, had little to do until 15 minutes from the end when a Grimsby corner ran invitingly to Colclough on the edge of the area. His half-volley was swerving towards the top corner when Wright's body arced in mid-air and produced a magnificent save. No one minds goalless games if goalkeeping like that is the reason.

Second Division Alan Buckley's side returned to the first via the play-offs and launched themselves into their new season with a mighty splash, securing the penalty after 64 seconds.

Disappointingly for Grimsby, and Black in particular, the excitement died when the spot-kick struck the legs of Wright who had been diving the wrong way.

Ipswich had clearly come for three points and, with Dyer soon dictating most of the play, Bobby Pette, the Dutch winger, was often sent flying down the Ipswich right.

The home defence, especially the central pairing of Peter Handyside and Richard Smith, looked distinctly uncomfortable with Pette's pace and they must have thought they had enough to worry about with David Johnson, scorer of 26 goals last season, lurking in the middle.

But Johnson was destined to have a chanceless match and it

Barnsley 2 West Bromwich Albion 2

De Zeeuw double takes the heat off Hendrie

Derek Potter

ONE of the biggest problems of being a player-manager is knowing when to play and when not to, and it is likely to increase for someone wearing both hats for the first time.

John Hendrie, who started seven games in Barnsley's brief flirtation with the Premiership and was on the bench for 15, played for 67 minutes in the scorching sun at Oakwell against hot opponents.

"I haven't got an ego but I have to play every week," said Hendrie, a scorer against Manchester United in a mem-

orable FA Cup tie last season. "It's do what I think is right for the team for each game."

Hendrie the manager had already made a bright start by persuading Arjan De Zeeuw to stay and sign a year's contract, joining his other recruits Kevin Richardson and Robin van der Laan. De Zeeuw scored with two powerful headers despite a recent nose operation. It is a pity he did not score again for Barnsley to win by a nose, but a draw was just about fair.

Both teams made a satisfactory start, with Denis Smith admitting that some fine tuning is required if Albion are to fulfil the manager's expectations and make a realistic

challenge for promotion after so many broken promises.

Both goals by De Zeeuw rewarded the impeccable supply line of Darren Bernard, the equaliser coming three minutes from the end to salvage the points Barnsley might have bagged much earlier if Hendrie had been more positive in his shooting and Alan Miller less reliable in goal.

Goals apart, Albion defended with determination against powerful runners in Van der Laan and Jan Aage Fjortoft. With Ashley Ward and Georgi Erstov available after injury, Barnsley should score more than the 37 they managed in the Premiership.

But there were some defensive lapses for Hendrie to worry about, although Barnsley are likely to concede many less than the 82 they leaked last season.

The volley by Richard Sneekes that powered Albion into a 12th-minute lead when they might well have been a goal down, and the second by Jimmy Quinn, admirably set up by Kevin Kilbane, rewarded attacking enterprisers rather than punishing defensive failings.

Kilbane produced an eye-catching first-half performance only to be shunned, accidentally for sure, by his colleagues in the second. It was more likely that Barns-

ley, 12-1 promotion shots, sussed the obvious and did what they could to limit the supply line.

Kilbane's value, though he is only 21, has soared towards £3 million — some three times more than it cost Albion to buy the Republic of Ireland international from Preston two years ago.

If Kilbane does not gain promotion to the Premiership this season Leeds United are one of several clubs considering offering him a short cut.

Albion, at 40-1, may be generously quoted by Ladbrokes, though the punters will recall last season's decline following Ray Harford's departure in December.

Stanic poised to join Everton while Unsworth ponders staying put and defying Villa orders

Ian Rose

THE Everton manager Walter Smith's pre-season spending spree is expected to gather more momentum this week with the arrival on Merseyside of the Croatian World Cup midfielder Mario Stanic.

Stanic, who played in all Croatia's games in France 98, yesterday verbally agreed to join his international teammate Steven Pletic at Everton in a £4.6 million deal from the Italian club Parma.

If Stanic can agree personal terms he will play on the right-hand side of what will be a new-look and expensively assembled Everton midfield.

Smith has already invested £4 million in Strasbourg's

Olivier Dacourt and £2.5 million on Monaco's John Collins.

His decision to sign Stanic will almost certainly signal the end of Everton's pursuit of the Aston Villa defender David Unsworth.

Unsworth had been poised to join Everton after Villa released him from his contract less than a week after he had completed a £3 million transfer from West Ham.

Curiously, after initially insisting a willingness to pay Villa the same fee for Unsworth, Everton were yesterday reported to have made a revised bid of only £2 million.

Villa's manager John Gregory has informed Unsworth that if he does not report to Villa Park for training this morning he will be suspended

and his wages stopped.

At the weekend, Unsworth — who began his career at Everton — was privately indicating that he did not intend to return to Villa.

Celtic's scoring problems were highlighted again as they lost 1-0 to Liverpool in a friendly at Parkhead.

Darren Jackson, Simon Donnelly and the substitute Harald Brattbak all wasted chances to equalise Oyvind Leonhardsen's 36th-minute goal for Liverpool.

The West Ham defender Julian Dicks came through his first match for 16 months without any problems following a knee injury.

Dicks played 25 minutes of a friendly against Enfield, but said he was still some way off returning to league action.



Manchester City 3 Blackpool 0

Stephen Bierley sees City's stock make early gain but recognises old shortcomings

THERE is a kind of indignation within the club. We have to get back at the first attempt." Joe Royle and his Manchester City players may feel a sense of wrong, and possibly injustice, at finding themselves in the Second Division, but for those with no connections with Maine Road the fall was inevitable — the result of season after season of ineptitude and debilitating internecine wrangling.

Now, if the chairman David Bernstein is to be believed, the fifth columnists have been extirpated and a new realism

The pressure is immenseness however and, despite a variety of restructurings during the summer, the club have failed to carry out any major injections of cash. The sale of Georgi Kinkladze to Ajax for \$5 million has temporarily appeased the bankers but past profligacy still clouds the future.

ing staff from an ridiculously large 54 to 39, but this remains at least a dozen too many. "There will definitely not be no significant signings at the moment," said Bernstein. "The key is to reconcile the balance of the squad with a sensible financial position." In years with Oldham Athletic producing successful teams, such as the cheap, so he may be regarded as well qualified to prosper within the confines of City's current parlous state. But the circumstances are hardly any way analogous.

There were no expectations at Oldham City Park and all Royle's there was to achieve without a hint of pressure or stress. It was a glorious anomaly of the sort

that every supporter of a small club dreams of but few witness. Style was unimportant. At his previous club Everton, and this despite winning the FA Cup, Royle quickly discovered how potent is the power of tradition. Goodson was not prepared to put up with a team of scuffers, and there is a similar disposition among the Maine Road fans.

Such has been City's fall that simple success may be enough to assuage the carpers this season. Certainly there was scant evidence of elegance or finesse against a modest Blackpool side on Saturday. All three goals were rapturously greeted by the huge home crowd, yet in

between times there were stirrings of discontent: simple passes went astray and several alarming gaps appeared in defence to bring reminders of last season's dismal shortcomings.

"The crowd can be your best friend here," said Royle, who had hope to keep the supporters steadfastly behind his team for as long as possible. He knows City will need to be far more convincing than they were against Blackpool if the critics are to be silenced.

Matches away to Notts County in the Worthington Cup and to Fulham on next Friday will give Royle, his players and the City fans a clearer indication of the task ahead.

Blackpool, a club solidly positioned in the past, began brightly enough but fell behind by not playing to the whistle and allowing Paul Dickov, clearly fouled but playing to the referee's advantage, to set up the opening goal for Shaun Goater.

Phil Clarkson, who had earlier shot over from an unmarked position, should have equalised but struck the bar, although at half-time Blackpool still appeared capable of worrying City. However, a thoroughly disjointed second-half performance handed the game to Royle's team, who included the ever-present Lee Bradbury and Kakhaber Tsikadze to go top of the table.

So far, so good.

Second Division

County get back in the groove

NOTTES COUNTY, runaway Third Division champions last season, picked up where they left off with a comprehensive 3-1 defeat of Oldham Athletic at Boundary Park on Saturday.

Two goals from Sean Farrell and another from Ian Richardson secured the points inside the first half-hour. Andrew Holt's last-minute goal was little consolation for Oldham's new manager Andy Ritchie.

There were few signs of relegation blues from Stoke City, who started the season with a 1-1 demolition of Northampton Town at Sixfields.

Graham Kavanagh opened

the scoring from the penalty spot for City and Peter Thorne and Dean Crowe sealed the Cobblers' fate after Colin Hill had been sent off. The Canadian international Carlo Corazzin pulled a goal back for the home side at the death.

Reading, relegated with Stoke and Manchester City and promotion prospects in the eyes of many, were soundly beaten at Wrexham. Ian Rush, the Welsh side's new player-coach, failed to get on the scoresheet in a 3-0 win but strikes from Karl Connolly and Peter Ward, plus an Andy Legg own-goal, meant he did not have to.

Preston beat York 3-0 at Deepdale, with the former Manchester United trainee Michael Appleton among the scorers, while one goal was enough to see Millwall win at Wigan and Luton triumph at Wycombe.

After the Luton captain Steve Davis's stunning free-kick from 20 yards had given his side the points the Hatters' manager Lennie Lawrence said: "I'm relieved. We controlled the game on a blindingly hot day and I'm highly pleased with the way that we worked so hard."

Two goals from Burnley's Andy Payton saw off Bristol Rovers 2-1 at Turf Moor and

Darren Carr's own-goal gifted Walsall their victory at Gillingham.

The Gillingham manager Tony Pulis described the defeat as the "worst we have played since I came here" and he plans to step up his efforts to land another big-money striker in the next few days.

His club-record signing Robert Taylor had a quiet debut following his £500,000 arrival from Brentford but Pulis claimed: "He was like a bow without an arrow."

Bournemouth overcame Lincoln 2-0 at Dean Court and a last-minute goal from Mark Sale accounted for Chesterfield at Colchester.

BARRY FRY's Peterborough, tipped as title contenders this season, looked anything but as Halifax Town celebrated their return to League football with an impressive 2-0 win at London Road.

The Conference champions earned their three points with goals from David Hanson and Geoff Horsfield.

Ron Noades, the former chairman of Crystal Palace, enjoyed a successful start in charge of Brentford, who beat Mansfield 3-0 at Griffin Park.

Kevin Rapsley scored twice and Darren Freeman completed the formalities.

Michael Knighton, director-

turned-coach, supervised Cardiff's opening-day success against Brighton. Ian Stevens, last season's top scorer, was on the mark again with the only goal after 17 minutes.

Swansea's new manager John Hollins got off to a fine start, goals either side of the interval from Martin Thomas and Steve Watkin giving his side a 2-0 home win over Exeter.

Thomas, a summer signing, put the Welsh side ahead on the stroke of half-time and within a minute of the restart Watkin had headed the second.

Torquay, who lost out in the play-off final at Wembley

in May, appeared to be suffering from a hangover as they went down 1-0 at home to Cambridge. To add to the indignity they had their right-back Andy Gurney and mid-fielder Kevin Hill dismissed.

Leyton Orient had their captain Dean Smith sent off at Chester but still won 2-0 with goals from Tony Richards and Jason Harris.

David D'Auria put Hull ahead with a sixth-minute goal at Rotherham but the Millers came back strongly through Vance Warner, Jason White and Lee Glover to win 1-1.

The former Sunderland and Derby striker Marco Gabbi-

Pinl endured an unhappy debut as Darlington were beaten 2-0 by Barnet at Feet-mans, Darren Currie and Scott McLeish scoring for the visitors.

Plymouth, relegated last season, came from behind to beat Rochdale at Home Park. Graham Lancashire opened the scoring from the penalty spot but Ronnie Mauge and Carl Jean replied.

Julian Hail's 35-year victory sealed Southend's 2-1 win at Scarborough. Paul Evans hit the winner for Shrewsbury after he had trailed 1-0 to Scunthorpe at Gay Meadow and Cardiff started with a 1-1 draw at Hartlepool.

Third Division

Halifax step up in winning style

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Nationwide League

FIRST DIVISION

[illegible]**SECOND DIVISION**[illegible]

THIRD DIVISION

[illegible]

Scottish League Cup

—

1914, 1916, 50 Dagobert Maithe 70 (Stuttgart).		
Hammer — (90) Alles — (11)		
1915, 1916, 27 1925, 1927, 1931 (Hermann Meers).		
Haus — (90) Stirling A — (192)		
1915, 24 1916, 24 (Hans)		
Chapman 1915 3rd 3-4 (post) 1916, 1917, 1931 (McCarthy) (Stewart).		
Hot Fife — (90) Motherhead — (91)		
1915, 1916, 1917, 1918, 1919, 1920, 1921, 1922, 1923, 1924, 1925, 1926, 1927, 1928, 1929, 1930, 1931, 1932, 1933, 1934, 1935, 1936, 1937, 1938, 1939, 1940, 1941, 1942, 1943, 1944, 1945, 1946, 1947, 1948, 1949, 1950, 1951, 1952, 1953, 1954, 1955, 1956, 1957, 1958, 1959, 1960, 1961, 1962, 1963, 1964, 1965, 1966, 1967, 1968, 1969, 1970, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1974, 1975, 1976, 1977, 1978, 1979, 1980, 1981, 1982, 1983, 1984, 1985, 1986, 1987, 1988, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029, 2030, 2031, 2032, 2033, 2034, 2035, 2036, 2037, 2038, 2039, 2040, 2041, 2042, 2043, 2044, 2045, 2046, 2047, 2048, 2049, 2050, 2051, 2052, 2053, 2054, 2055, 2056, 2057, 2058, 2059, 2060, 2061, 2062, 2063, 2064, 2065, 2066, 2067, 2068, 2069, 2070, 2071, 2072, 2073, 2074, 2075, 2076, 2077, 2078, 2079, 2080, 2081, 2082, 2083, 2084, 2085, 2086, 2087, 2088, 2089, 2090, 2091, 2092, 2093, 2094, 2095, 2096, 2097, 2098, 2099, 2100, 2101, 2102, 2103, 2104, 2105, 2106, 2107, 2108, 2109, 2110, 2111, 2112, 2113, 2114, 2115, 2116, 2117, 2118, 2119, 2120, 2121, 2122, 2123, 2124, 2125, 2126, 2127, 2128, 2129, 2130, 2131, 2132, 2133, 2134, 2135, 2136, 2137, 2138, 2139, 2140, 2141, 2142, 2143, 2144, 2145, 2146, 2147, 2148, 2149, 2150, 2151, 2152, 2153, 2154, 2155, 2156, 2157, 2158, 2159, 2160, 2161, 2162, 2163, 2164, 2165, 2166, 2167, 2168, 2169, 2170, 2171, 2172, 2173, 2174, 2175, 2176, 2177, 2178, 2179, 2180, 2181, 2182, 2183, 2184, 2185, 2186, 2187, 2188, 2189, 2190, 2191, 2192, 2193, 2194, 2195, 2196, 2197, 2198, 2199, 2200, 2201, 2202, 2203, 2204, 2205, 2206, 2207, 2208, 2209, 2210, 2211, 2212, 2213, 2214, 2215, 2216, 2217, 2218, 2219, 2220, 2221, 2222, 2223, 2224, 2225, 2226, 2227, 2228, 2229, 2230, 2231, 2232, 2233, 2234, 2235, 2236, 2237, 2238, 2239, 2240, 2241, 2242, 2243, 2244, 2245, 2246, 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Rugby Union

Robert Kitson on a surprising double development that could see a new prestige competition launched and English clubs back in the European Cup

British League touted as peace breaks out

IT MAY just be the glorious weather playing tricks, but the most persistent clouds hanging over British club rugby appear about to lift simultaneously. A meeting of Home Nations' officials in Cardiff today, it is hoped, will clear the way for both a British League and the re-entry of English clubs into the European Cup, a double whammy which would clear up all sorts of debris.

Confirmation of plans to establish a 20-team British League, featuring 14 English clubs, four from Wales and the two Scottish "super-districts" emerged yesterday to the unfamiliar sound of applause from virtually all quarters. The challenge now for Brian Balster, the newly elected chairman of the Rugby Football Union's management board, is to help ensure the sexy-looking draft proposals become reality.

Cautioning that "negotiations are still very delicate", Balster and his counterparts, including the International Board's chairman Vernon Pugh, will be discussing a two-conference structure of 10 sides playing each other home and away, followed by semi-finals and a Twickenham or Cardiff final.

In return for the co-operation of the other unions, English clubs will be asked to shelve their dispute with ERC Ltd, which runs the European Cup, and rejoin the tournament won by Bath in January, thereby creating two vibrant competitions to rival the southern hemisphere's Super 12. There is even talk of a play-off between the British League champions and the Super 12 winners to prove it.

Just days ago English clubs' horizons were markedly narrower but, after three years of messy infighting which reflected little credit on anyone, throwing the entire jigsaw up in the air a final time seems to have resulted in all the pieces miraculously falling into place.

"There is a strong possibility the English clubs will be going back into Europe this season and that there will also be a big plus for our current Premiership sponsors Allied Dunbar," said Balster, adding he saw "no barrier to Ireland" joining, too.

"English clubs will still be subject to relegation and if this gets off the ground for a one-off season, we will institute serious debate about sorting out the whole future of rugby in Europe below international level."

The biggest stumbling block remains the strained relationship between the English clubs and ERC Ltd, seemingly irrevocably broken last week, while Pugh can sense an opportunity to bring the more militant club owners into line.

"We would expect the English Premiership clubs to withdraw their application with the European Commission that challenges IB rules before significant progress could be made," he admitted.

As the available cake swells, the English clubs will be tempted to mind their manners. The Scots, meanwhile, could barely contain their enthusiasm, not surprising given the union's outlay on the new look Glasgow Celticians and Edinburgh Reivers, who last week appeared in danger of having no one serious to play.

"We believe the early establishment of a British and Irish League is essential if northern hemisphere rugby is to make up the ground which has already been lost to our southern hemisphere rivals. It is the missing component," said the SRU executive board chairman Duncan Paterson.

"We believe it would propagate an era of stability and unity for British and Irish rugby without which the prospects have looked increasingly bleak."

Balster has known from the moment he took the job what the neighbours were thinking. "I had so many phone calls from Scotland and Wales, I began to think I'd been elected at the wrong AGM," he joked last month.

His priority has been to ensure "quality" cross-border fixtures for the leading English clubs but, following last week's about-turn by the French clubs over participation in Europe, had pleaded with everyone to wait a year.

This latest initiative, therefore, has a strong whiff of opposites attracting at short notice. This summer's events on and off the field have concentrated all sorts of minds and the heresy of Welsh clubs playing in an English-based competition is, in the view of former Wales captain Robert Jones, bearable.

"The shop window in Welsh rugby has to be the international team and the only way to make it strong again is for the best players to be playing in the best available competition." If the proposals stall today, a lot of people will want to know why.

As the English clubs' dissatisfaction with ERC has shown, the split of revenue from TV and sponsorship deals remains divisive whatever competition is set up. Even if they back down and enter Europe this season, the English are already demanding a new company runs the event next year.

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The pitfalls

ENTRY POLICY How will clubs currently outside the top 20 qualify for the British League in future? No club-based union will allow an elite to retain an automatic place. That would mean, for example, play-offs between the last-placed English clubs in the respective conferences and the top two in the current All-Ireland Premiership.

WELSH CLUBS With the priorities of Cardiff, Pontypridd, Swansea and Ebbw Vale lying elsewhere, whether the rest of Wales's senior clubs? Many are already strapped for cash; the Swansea Cup winners Llanelli are among those who fear a player-drain.

IRISH RUGBY As things stand, Irish players wanting to stay at home and face top-class foreign opposition have six European games (provided they play for Leinster, Munster or Ulster) and odd matches against touring sides. It is that enough to encourage a competitive national XV? Expect a strong Irish lobby for inclusion.

DATES Unless ERC budge, the European Cup will kick off on the weekend of September 20, a direct clash with the third round of English Premiership fixtures.

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TRADITION Imagine a season without a showdown between Bath and Gloucester, or even Leicester. Unless they are drawn together in the domestic knock-out cup, that is set to happen this year.

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Oriental express makes even Tiger look tame

David Davies heralds the arrival of Se Ri Pak, golfing phenomenon, for the British Women's Open at Lytham St Annes on Thursday

THE golfing world breathed a gentle sigh of relief when Brandie Burton won, or perhaps more to the point Se Ri Pak did not win, the du Maurier Classic in Canada at the start of this month. It was almost inaudible but it was there — pure, unadulterated relief that a more natural order of things had been reinstated.

For had Pak won it would have meant that a 20-year-old Korean, in her first season on the women's tour in America, had succeeded in three major championships in a row — or every major championship in which she had played.

As it is, Pak, the winner of the McDonald's LPGA Championship and the US Women's Open, has won only two out of three. As a rookie she was not eligible to play in the first major of the season, the Dinah Shore in March.

But by taking consecutive majors — labelled, naturally, Pak-to-Pak wins — she has announced herself in the most dramatic fashion possible. There have been records galore: the youngest US Women's Open champion ever; the youngest to win two majors in a season; a four-round total of 261, set while winning the Jamie Farr Classic, that was four strokes lower than the record aggregate for an LPGA event; and a round of 61, the lowest in LPGA history.

"Forget Tiger," said Colleen Walker, who won the du Maurier last year. "Se Ri is the real phenomenon."

Certainly she has, in just over half a season, already won more majors than Woods in his 13 attempts. Had she won the du Maurier she would have won as many majors as Nancy Lopez in 21 years on the circuit.

The last player to win two majors in a season on the LPGA tour was Laura Davies, in 1986. The Englishwoman has had a quiet time in America this year but recognises a star when she sees one.

"I've tasted being one of the top players," Davies says, "and



Korean tee ceremony: Se Ri Pak prepares for action. PHOTOGRAPHS: HARRY HOW, ANDREW CUTRANO, EDNA O SHAW, ALLSPORT, MULTIMEDIA GETTY

I'd like to be one of the feared players again.

"At the moment, when my name goes on the leaderboard to one care — they probably figure that I'll do something wrong and fall off. But with Se Ri, you just count down the holes until she catches you."

The emergence of Se Ri as, inevitably, the leader of the pack, is one of the more astounding sports stories of our time. There is no great tradition of golf in South Korea and, although she was introduced to the sport in the conventional way — by her father Joon Chul Pak — he is not a conventional figure. He has been linked with the Korean equivalent of the Mafia and at one point had to leave home hurriedly to live in Hawaii.

Joon ran a construction business in Taejeon, some 100 miles south of Seoul, and in July this year it was reported in the Shisa Journal, a weekly

newspaper, that "Joon Chul Pak, who was a member of the underworld in Taejeon City, fled to Hawaii in 1988 when the police began clamping down on organised crime."

Joon himself says, through an interpreter: "To be honest, I was a thug in the past. I have lived a tough life." He has the scars on his stomach, from stab wounds, to prove it.

But this unlikely figure was also a golfer, one good enough to represent Taejeon in national events in Korea, and when, as little girls and boys will, Se Ri asked if she could have a go, Daddy was naturally pleased. Half an hour later he was both surprised and delighted.

"She could grip the club perfectly and she could hit shots," he said. "She could get the ball airborne." Like Earl Woods, Joon Chul Pak quickly decided that he had a talent on his hands; again like Earl, he decided on some unusual, not to say controversial, ways of developing it.

In the New York Times Ira Berkow relates one such method. Joon decided that he wanted Se Ri to be brave and to that end he took her to a local cemetery several times to camp out overnight. Having erected the tent and told the girl, barely in her teens, that "I won't let the ghosts get you", he left her there.

ONE night, when he returned, Se Ri said: "I'm warm here" and her father knew that she had learned to live with her fears. They never went again. Years later, when the pressure came on in golf tournaments, Se Ri, in her still-developing English, would say: "I have no nervous."

Joon also made her practise every day, even during the severe Korean winters that were often so cold that icicles formed in her hair. He says now: "My wife was worried that I would kill Se Ri, and for what — golf, a game that is not so popular in Korea. But I knew she could be a great

player." She began to prove this in Korea. As an amateur she won 30 tournaments, turned professional in 1986 and of the 14 events she played won six and came second in seven. Not too many people noticed, although to their great credit the multinational company Samsung did, and signed her up.

By now Joon had decided that he had taught his daughter all that he could, and determined that her future lay in America. All he needed was someone to further her golfing education, and someone to pay the bills. He turned to David Leadbetter, golf's most renowned instructor, who agreed to help for a year, and he also turned to Samsung, who agreed to cover all the costs — including his own.

"It's not something I normally do," says Leadbetter of the arrangement in which Se Ri took a condominium at his home club of Lake Nona in Orlando, Florida. "I'm just not at the club often enough. But I knew straight away that if I couldn't get her to be a world beater, then I wasn't very good at my job."

"For me, it was love at first swing. It's not that it was a perfect swing, but it had that intangible quality about it. The sound of the ball off the clubface was like that of the male Tour players."

"Se Ri has effortless power, just like Sam Snead. There are a lot of similarities in that regard to Ernie Els, who hits it miles without seeming to try. Se Ri is very very long and yet she plays within herself, it comes naturally."

Ask Leadbetter what Se Ri's strengths are and the answer — "she has no weaknesses" — is something of a cliché. But there is nothing that the Korean does less than well and her length plus her skill out of bunkers are exceptional.

"During the winter I had some European Tour players visit Lake Nona," says Leadbetter, "and they were dumbfounded when they saw her hitting balls out of the sand."



Gary Player is acknowledged as having been the best bunker player of all time, but when Leadbetter saw him at the Open Championship at Royal Birkdale this year he teased him that he knew of someone better — and that she was a woman.

DURING her schooldays in Korea, when not playing golf, Se Ri was a hurdler and a shot putter. "It was a combination," says Leadbetter. "It's made her very strong, and very flexible. She's also got a great work ethic. She just wants to hit balls all day and we've had to tone her down because of the danger of tendinitis."

Leadbetter is now a believer. His fee for the first 12 months

was \$120,000. Now, for the second year, in recognition of an outstanding talent, it is half that.

When Se Ri earned her Tour card she set herself the incredible target of not just winning a tournament, but winning five.

When the McDonald's Championship came along she had not won even one, and this was to be her first major. "I told her," says Leadbetter, "that this was a course that would suit her. It was very long and Laura Davies had won on it."

Pak duly won, took the US Open as well, then the Jamie Farr and the Giant Eagle Classics. Leadbetter has no hesitation in saying: "I think she's going to dominate. She's only been in the top 10 four times this year and each of

those has been a win. When she gets into the hunt, she changes gear."

"I've told her that she will have to re-arrange her target. She'll have to win eight times this year; that's her new goal."

WHEN Se Ri pronounced "Suh-Ree" as in "yes" as in "surprise" — won the US Open, in a sudden-death play-off against the 20-year-old amateur and Curtis Cup player Jenny Chuasiriporn (Shuh-seer-up-porn), both players were on what was to be the final green in two shots.

It was Chuasiriporn to go first, with a 20-foot downhill putt that had a double break. As he contemplated the situa-

tion Johnny Miller, in the commentary tower, offered the thought that "this championship is gonna be decided by a mistake."

"The pressure is just too great . . ." Chuasiriporn proceeded to hit a wonderful putt that shaved the hole and just failed to drop.

Now Se Ri had an 18-footer, straight, uphill for a birdie and the win. She hit it hard, she hit it on line and as it disappeared into the hole, Miller's words disappeared down his throat.

It is hard to blame the commentator. He did not know about the ghosts in the cemetery he did not know about the icicles and he did not know that here was one golfer who, when she says "I have no nervous", she really, really means it.

Way back when . . .



Frank Keating celebrates the coming of age of the on-drive that capped it all for Geoff Boycott

Taste of success: Boycott after his 100th hundred. PHOTOGRAPH: EAMONN MCCABE

TWENTY-ONE years ago, on Thursday August 11, 1977, was played one of the best remembered and most resonant single strokes of recent cricket history. One can log a few others: Denis Compton's hook to fine-leg at The Oval's

Vauxhall End to bring back the Ashes in 1953; Ian Botham's first-ball six off Craig McDermott in 1985, which scattered the members high in the Edgbaston pavilion; before that David Gower, with his "Bubbles" hairdo, announcing himself to Test cricket on the same ground with that nervous, first-ball boundary off Liaquat Ali; Graham Gooch's leg-side for a single off Ravi Shastri for his 300 at Lord's.

Tomorrow is the anniversary of the most celebrated of on-drives. It was at Headingley on the first day of the fourth Ashes Test of 1977. The bowler, from the Rugby Stand end, was the Australia captain Greg Chappell. The batsman was Geoff Boycott.

Boycott remembers: "I can still see it vividly, almost in slow motion. 'I saw it then with an amazing sort of clarity and something approaching elation. As soon as it left his hand I knew I was going to hit it and I knew where I was going to hit it."

Long before it pitched I knew exactly what I was going to do, as though I was standing outside myself, watching myself play the shot. It was a fantastic

feeling. The stroke was 'out-side to in', the ball hit the middle of the bat and went just past the far stumps on the on-side as Graham Roope [his batting partner] jumped out of the way. 'As soon as I struck it I lifted the bat high in the air. In the milli-second that followed I realised what it all meant and my arms folded over my head."

Boycott's hundredth hundred — on his home ground at Headingley and the only batsman of the then 18 to achieve the feat in a Test. Roope, Surrey's master fieldsman and, at 52, still playing and coaching in Yorkshire's cricket hotbed of Farley, remembers he was probably as nervous as Boycott himself.

"At 95, Geoff pushed Leanne Pascoe into the covers to pinch the bowling and, not being the easiest person to run with, I thought to myself: 'What if he gets to 99 and somehow I contrive to run him out. What a calamity!'"

Chappell put himself on and Geoff hit the shot so sweetly, perfectly controlled, he let the ball come, bent the knee and clocked it straight at me. I lifted my left leg and

the ball passed under it. 'But what if the ball had, say, hit my heel and stopped dead, and then he'd been out next ball. Equal calamity, eh? Instead I could walk down and pat him on the shoulder."

"I recall my precise words: 'Congratulations, Geoff, brilliant."

"By then, the crowds were rushing on and, in the general milling about, a kid pinched Geoff's cap and ran off with it. I'm told it took about seven or eight minutes to clear the crowds and, when the Australians, who had flopped on he ground, were ready to resume play, it was Geoffrey who was being adamant. 'I'm not starting again till I get my cap back,' he was saying."

"Nor would he. Another cap was brought from the pavilion but he wanted the one he'd been batting in. There was a Tammy announcement for it to be returned and then this kid sheepishly emerged from the Western Terrace and gave it to a policeman."

Boycott ended, last out, with 191. He had put on 74 for the fifth wicket with Roope (54) and England's total of 486 ensured a handsome win by an innings and

85 runs. In his autobiography (Macmillan, 1987) Boycott writes: "I was destined to get that century. It was my karma. It must have been written by someone, somewhere, before I went in to bat."

"There is no other explanation for the memory and magic of it . . . It was the greatest moment of my career."

"I may have played better and more importantly but this was the most magical moment of my life."

"The Guardian cricket correspondent John Ariotti wrote: 'This Boycott is the committed cricketer, a lonely perfectionist moved to the heart at coming to such a high peak of performance before his own people, and doing so with an innings typical of a technique which probably has come nearer than that of any other batsman to the elimination of error . . ."

"As Boycott sighted his ambition close ahead he began to walk into the bowling, pushing it away with a bat which seemed all unmissable middle."

Long after play ended a crowd before the pavilion chanted, called for and celebrated him."

In the Daily Telegraph Michael Melford, like the batsman himself, also sensed the feat pre-ordained: "Only the most macabre imagination could have pictured Boycott failing to make this hundred . . . The ball was not halfway to the boundary when the hero's bat was raised on high and, amid a rare hubbub, small boys were converging on him from all over Yorkshire."

Before Roope joined him Boycott had lost his captain Mike Brearley (a Marsh 6, Thomson 0) to the third ball of the day, Bob Woolmer at 82, Derek Randall at 105 and Tony Greig at 201.

Brearley recalled: "Boycott needed all his skill, especially against Thomson and Walker, who moved the ball all day despite the hot sun."

"The '100th 100' shot was the perfect one, just outside the off-stump, half-volley, swinging away slightly; instead of hitting it to mid-off he picked his spot and drove it back at the non-striker . . . and they cheered for almost 10 minutes."

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APPOINTMENTS 19

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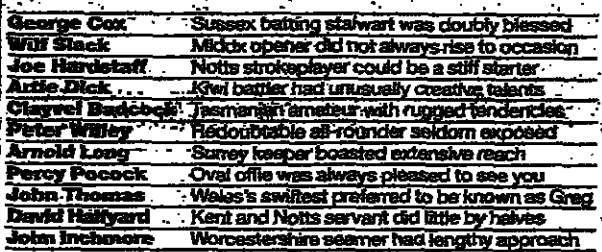
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Why cameras and technology can never replace common sense

In this particular case, practice might not necessarily help. Any club umpire should know that there are 42 written laws of cricket and one unwritten: When in Doubt, Keep Your Finger Down. Javed has given a series of decisions that were no more beyond reasonable doubt than the conviction of Derek Bentley. That's nothing to do with technology. It's to do with common sense.



London Road, London EC1R
Tel 0171 713 4102

next on the schedule. In 2000, he will be concentrating on his Olympic preparations.



222 for six against Gloucestershire, who were tumbled out for 151.

INTERACTIVE

22 SPORTS NEWS

Racing

Deauville big-race winner on target for Prix du Moulin at Longchamp. **Graham Rock** reports

Pearl offensive pays off for Japanese

SEKKING The Pearl became the first Japanese-trained horse to win in Europe when she beat Jim And Tonic and Mucha to land the Group One Prix Maurice de Gheest over six and a half furlongs at Deauville yesterday.

Having amassed £1.6 million in prize money at home, the four-year-old filly was sent to Europe by her enthusiastic owner, Akiko Uenaka, who took a year to persuade the trainer Hideyuki Mori, that the ambitious overseas raid should be mounted.

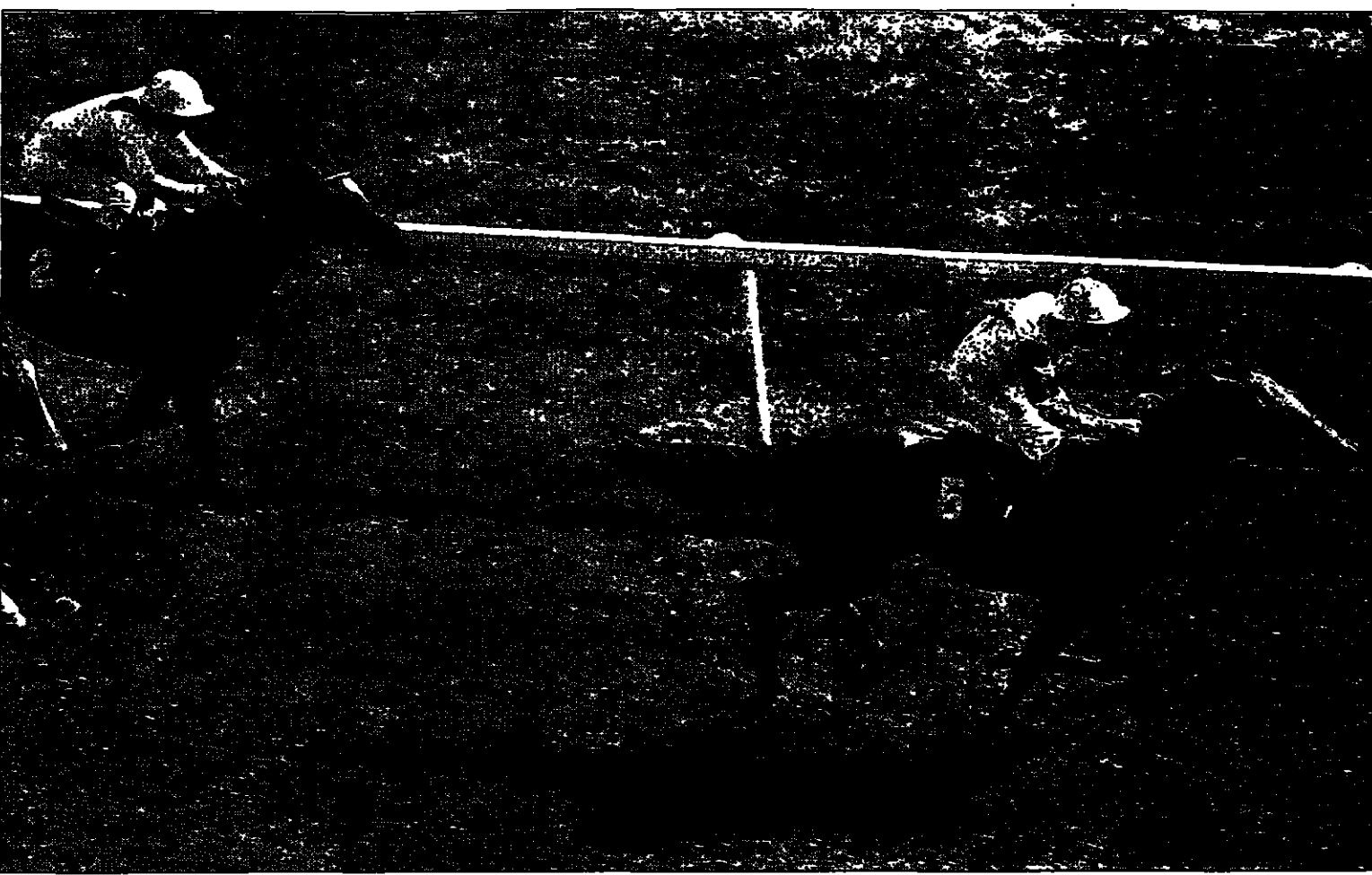
Mori had saddled Japan's only previous Group winner abroad, Fujiyama Kenzan, in the Hong Kong International Cup three years ago.

For the previous two weeks Seeking The Pearl had been lodging at Geoff Wragg's second yard in Newmarket, with Miss Uenaka supervising her filly's preparation. "I didn't want her to run straight after having flown over," she said. "This is a dream. I can't believe it. The idea was to accept a challenge, to have some success. The prize money is higher in Japan but I wanted her to prove herself abroad."

Bought for \$180,000 at the Keeneland Sales in Kentucky, Seeking The Pearl will be trained for the Prix du Moulin at Longchamp next month. Then she will return to America to race, before being retired to the paddocks.

The result was a bigger shock than reflected in the winner's starting price, 8-1, at home. Seeking the Pearl is far from consistent. "When I saw her this morning, I knew she would run well," said Miss Uenaka.

"In Japan, the media make fun of her, but I don't mind. She has a few quirks, and if there's rain during the race, she will stop to a walk. But when she's in the mood, she's



Skip away... Hardy Dancer is well clear of Terom in the closing stages of the Tokyo Handicap at Epsom yesterday

PHOTO: JULIAN HERBERT

a monster, and will streak away without being touched by the whip."

Mucha finished best of the five British runners in third, crossing the line two lengths behind the winner. "He's run a great race," said Mick Channon. "He lost five lengths coming round the bend in the Sussex Stakes,

and is much better on a straight course."

The British did better in the Listed Prix de Thuberville, in which Frankie Dettori landed a five-length victory on Bryony Brind, who may run in the Park Hill Stakes.

Michael Tabor won the £150,000 Heinz '87 Phoenix Stakes at Leopardstown, not

with the joint favourite Black Amber trained by Neville Callaghan, but with Lavery, seemingly the least fancied of Aidan O'Brien's three runners. Partnered by Walter Swinburn, Lavery came through to outpace the Coventry Stakes third Access All Areas well inside the final furlong.

"He's a fine, big colt who travelled well all the way for me. I gave him one smack and he accelerated well," said Swinburn. "The sky is the limit for this horse," said the champion Irish trainer, who nominated the Prix Morny as a possible target for his 14-1 winner.

Pat Eddery, who rode Access All Areas, had better luck when James Toller's March Star took the Phoenix Sprint Stakes.

Clive Brittain's stable is now flying, and his intrepid traveller Luso, ridden by Darrell Holland, racked up another £60,000 when beating Ungaro in the Grosser Erdgas-Preis in Germany.

Thirk evening meeting runners and riders

GRAHAM ROCK	TOP FORM
6.10 Our Way	Our Way
6.35 Upper Chamber	Upper Chamber
6.50 Moon Glow	Moon Glow
7.05 Moon Glow	Moon Glow
7.20 Moon Glow	Moon Glow
7.35 Moon Glow	Moon Glow
7.50 Moon Glow	Moon Glow
8.05 Moon Glow	Moon Glow

Left-handed track, sharp in nature, of just over 1km with 4m-nm. Straight of 100m. High numbers best in sprint. Seven day winners: 7.05 Tarned Times; 8.05 Dancin' En. Weathered first time: 7.05 Tarned Times; 8.05 Dancin' En. Figures in brackets after horse's name denote days since last outing. Jumps.

6.10 BOW TELEVISION - M.G.B. FACILITY HANDICAP			
2m 12,531 (11 declared)			
1	7145-6 Tarned Times (11) 5-10-0	A. Cullen	58
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FA Charity Shield Arsenal 3 Manchester United 0

Wenger's all-stars write an epitaph to United

Overmars sets Double winners on way to victory that promises more success

David Lacey



THIS time the FA Charity Shield provided not so much a prologue to the new season as a postscript to the old. Certainly for Manchester United, the occasion was more of an epitaph, a reminder of why they had finished their last campaign untypically empty-handed.

At least finishing runners-up to Arsène Wenger's team in the Premiership assured United of a chance to reach the Champions League via the second qualifying round, in which they will meet LKS Lodz on Wednesday with the return in Poland a fortnight later. It is a hurdle Alex Ferguson's players should overcome, although the tidal nature of yesterday's performance suggested last

season's problems, far from going away, are already threatening to multiply. Charity Shield games are, by tradition, sparring sessions which rarely offer meaningful clues about how the leading teams are going to shape up. If United are lucky this will again turn out to be the case, for the way they played made a nonsense of their ebullient form on their Scandinavian tour.

Yesterday they were undone by the qualities which had enabled Arsenal to deny United their fifth championship in six seasons.

Wembley will be Arsenal's home from home this season in the Champions League. They won the Charity Shield much in the manner of a home team, achieving little during the first half-hour but rarely looking like losing the game once Marc Overmars put them ahead in the 34th minute.

The form the Dutchman found in the new year largely inspired the long winning sequence which enabled Wenger's side to overtake United at the top and yesterday his pace on the left again

turned events in Arsenal's favour. This time last year doubts were expressed about the depth of Wenger's squad compared to the talent available to Ferguson but the way Arsenal kept their shape and momentum amid a proliferation of substitutions in the second half suggested that balance has shifted the other way. Ferguson, for example, is still looking for a striker of sufficient quality to make United a power again both at home and abroad. Wenger, by contrast, took off both Overmars and Dennis Bergkamp, who had a tightened hamstring, and was still able to pose an attacking threat through Christopher Wreh and Luis Boa Morte.

Nicolas Anelka, whose form in the latter half of last season enhanced Arsenal's drive for the title and persuaded Wenger that he could afford to offload Ian Wright to West Ham, stayed on for the 90 minutes, much to the discomfort of Jaap Stam, the centre-back for whom Manchester United paid PSV Eindhoven £10.75 million as a replacement for Gary Pallister.

Perhaps they thought they were paying this sum in guile. Either way it continues to look an exorbitant amount for a defender whose solid tackling is offset by his lack

of speed on the turn. The enduring strength of Arsenal's central defenders, and in particular Tony Adams, will always sharpen the contrast when opponents make mistakes at the back. Adams looked far happier coping with the tireless but limited efforts of Andy Cole than trying to track down stray Romanians in the World Cup.

Arsenal's French midfield pair, Patrick Vieira and Emmanuel Petit, had certainly more vivid World Cup memories than any of those around or against them who had been involved in the finals. For a time it looked as though their thoughts still lay trapped in the celebrations barely four weeks earlier.

United enjoyed their best period while Vieira and Petit were re-tuning their concentration. Roy Keane, playing his first competitive game since damaging cruciate ligaments 11 months earlier, appeared to have restored important solidity to the United midfield.

David Beckham was subjected to the moronic booing which, after his dismissal in the World Cup and his effect on England's fortunes, will be the player's lot for some while. But he still played with skill and intelligence. Ryan Giggs was full of pace and



Two in front... Christopher Wreh fires his side's second goal past Peter Schmeichel at Wembley

ANDREW REDINGTON

penetration, and for a time the passing was fluent and perceptive.

With Teddy Sheringham on the bench, however, United's movements lacked a focal point, not to mention the strength in the air necessary to challenge Arsenal's lofty defence. Ferguson's failure so far

to sign an alternative to Sheringham could revive his importance at Old Trafford. True, he did drag his team's best chance wide late on, after replacing Cole, but at least he had put himself in a position to score.

By then United's afternoon had long lost its point. They

never really recovered from falling behind 11 minutes before half-time to a goal which punished muddled defending.

Vieira's long pass dropped to Bergkamp in the penalty area with neither centre-back closing the Dutchman down. Bergkamp's backheel was intercepted by Ronny Johnsen, but the ball then bounced off Anelka to Overmars, who hooked it smartly past Peter Schmeichel.

As the United bench began to empty, so their football became cramped and even more vulnerable to the pace on Arsenal's flanks. Four minutes before the hour Overmars and

Anelka worked the ball to Wreh, who darted through a yawning gap to increase their lead.

United fell further behind after 72 minutes. Ray Parlour's searching pass found Anelka easily outpacing Stam to beat Schmeichel at his near post. **Substitutions:** Arsenal: Wreh for Bergkamp (41), Hughes for Overmars (67min), Boa Morte for Petit (72). Bould for Adams (78); Grimandi for Vieira (84). Manchester United: Sörstorp for Butt (53); Cole for Sheringham (70); Gryff for Giggs (70); P. Neville for Scholes (70); Berg for Keane (76).

Score: Arsenal 3, Manchester United 0. **Referee:** G. Poll (Tring).

Martin Thorpe and Jim White, page 15

Few things cause as MUCH STRESS as driving in the fast lane.

ESPECIALLY WHEN YOU'RE DOING TWO MILES AN HOUR.

IT'S ONE OF THE MOST unnerving, stress-inducing sights you can encounter on the motorway. The scarlet glow of brake lights stretching away over the horizon. More often than not, this is usually the cue for your heart to start racing, your palms to moisten, and your muscles to bunch up. A predicament many of us suffer with astonishing frequency, if the statistics are to be believed. 50% of motorway drivers, for instance, experience hold-ups on a regular basis, while 20% claim that congestion adds more than four hours a week to their work-related journeys.

Sadly, the signs point to these ailing, clogged-up arteries getting worse, rather than better. The RAC's prognosis is that by 2005, the average motorist could be spending the equivalent of two weeks each year stuck in traffic jams.

Reason enough, we believe, to spend a few minutes reading about the Omega's helpful new navigation aids. We're not saying they can part the traffic and miraculously whisk you out of a snarl-up, but they can help steer you away from the trouble in the first place.

THE ROAD TO RELAXATION

FINDING your way to an unfamiliar destination is a simple enough proposition; you do your homework the night before with an atlas, and plot your course. But what if you wake the following morning to the news that a jack-knifed HGV has reduced your route to a single lane of misery? What then? You consult a reliable navigation aid called CARIN.

CARIN is a satellite-based system which means it can accurately pinpoint the whereabouts of your car, and its progress along a given route. Punch in your destination, and it details the quickest way from A to B. It does this clearly and precisely, using spoken instructions and an LCD display. Should you take a wrong turn, or make a detour, CARIN quickly recalculates the quickest route from your new position.

ALL Omegas are also fitted with Traffic Master Oracle, a dashboard-mounted device which provides up-to-the-minute traffic information. Not only does it tell you where to expect a jam, it even gives you the approximate length of the delay. Very handy if you need to phone ahead to the office to tell them how late you're going to be.

HOW TO COPE WITH A HOLD-UP

- If the traffic has come to a standstill, use the time to massage your neck and shoulders in slow circular movements. Better still, get a passenger to do it for you.
- Listen to some relaxing music, readings of poetry, or talking book tapes.
- Take slow deep breaths for two to three minutes, then breathe normally again.
- Keep some emergency aids in the car. Loosener and bugles are well known stress-busters.

THE VAUXHALL RELAXATION TECHNIQUE

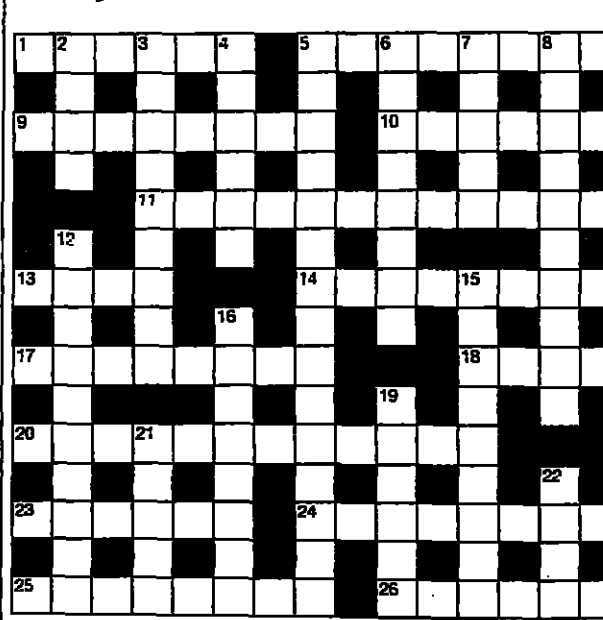
ALLOW us to point out the soothing qualities of the Omega to you in the calm, tranquil surroundings of your nearest Vauxhall dealership. Contact 0345 400 202 for 'soot' information, and how to arrange a test drive.

A Positive Aid To Relaxation. OMEGA

Arsenal				Man Utd			
Dixon	Keown	Adams	Winterburn	Schmeichel	Stam	Beckham	G. Neville
Parlour	Vieira	Park	Overmars				
	Anelka	Bergkamp					
		Cole					
Giggs	Butt	Keane					
Irvine	Johnsen						

Guardian Crossword No 21,349

Set by Rufus



- Across**
- A problem for the bridge builder to emphasise (6)
 - Painting with rollers? (8)
 - Submerged position of cadilla, say? (8)
 - No open events in these games? (6)
 - Something bound to appeal to the less affluent readers (5,7)
 - It's impossible to connect with these services (4)
 - They open out for the novice (6)
 - An animal looking for his master (5,3)
 - Weapon causes many disquiet (4)
 - Turn a blind eye when an employee wants to leave? (4,2,6)
 - Replace points in a car engine (6)
 - Descriptive of the lesser evil? (3,2,3)
 - Where they have female grooves? (6)
 - It's reddish-brown, but not orange (6)
- Down**
- Lean nurse (4)
 - Used to be troubled (6)
 - Organisation for the better? (6)
 - Favourite places for having tantrums? (6,7)
 - A sharp fall in sweet production? (4,4)
 - Young trainee acted badly (5)
 - Head ball on to right winger (10)
 - The case for the prosecution? (10)
 - Restrict dangerous drivers—they're often flat out on the road (6)
 - Was in contact when Joan died in an accident (6)
 - It may be carried on, though bylaws forbid it (6)
 - Come in to register (5)
 - Secure top of fossil in rough sea (4)
- WINNERS OF WORDS PUZZLER 21,348**
- This week's winners of a Collins English Dictionary are Roger Freeman of Ware, Hertfordshire, Michael Goodenham of Ipswich, Suffolk, Yvonne Bassett of Hampton, Middlesex, Dorothy Lawton of Seascote, Cumbria, and M. Yule of Nottingham.
- Please allow 28 days for delivery

Solution tomorrow

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Recycled paper made up 41.4% of the two main titles in the first half of 1997

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